



## Scouting Report: QB Will Grier, West Virginia

*\*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.*

**Will Grier** is going to be the lightning rod QB debate QB prospect of 2019.

Two main themes are going to define the assessments of Grier for scouts/analysts, and I would bet that the mainstream football people, and thus the fans, will look at the glass half-empty in both cases and it will hurt him as a prospect in people's minds. The two areas that will be debated and/or held against him: (1) big results/output at West Virginia prompting a... 'is he a system QB?' debate, and (2) his family background/his transfer from Florida.

First, let's summarize the 'unique' Grier journey from high school to hotly debated top NFL Draft QB prospect...

-- Was an all-everything QB prospect in high school. A national High School Player of the Year winner coached throughout his pre-college career by his father, who is an experienced football coach. He could have gone anywhere he wanted coming out of high school – he chose Florida.

-- At the same time Grier was a top high school prospect, his two younger brothers became major sensations on the formerly-popular social media platform 'Vine' (a kinda Instagram/YouTube-ish type thing?). His younger brothers had followers in the millions, some of the biggest subscribed people in that world – they were famous for being famous, in a sense, and it created an interesting aside in Grier's life story. He was one of the most coveted high school football players in the nation, but his little brothers were exponentially more famous/notorious.

-- Redshirted his freshman season at Florida/2014. Was not named main starter in 2015 but played a lot right away...and two games into the season became the starting QB. In his six games played, in 2015, Florida went 6-0 and Grier had 10 TD passes/3 INTs in that span...but mid-2015 season, Grier was suspended out of the blue. He tested positive for a banned substance found in an over-the-counter supplement he was taking.

Grier's appeal was denied, and he was suspended for one year...he couldn't return until mid-2016/the following season. Grier was such a hot prospect and Florida was playing so well, the fans were up in arms with the NCAA and whole situation. Grier was faced with a tough choice...between the 2nd-half of 2015 season and the first half of 2016 season it was like two lost seasons. Also, coming back halfway through the season was going to be unfair to the team, and whichever QB took over, so Grier decided to transfer...and that caused waves. Some labeled him a quitter and prima donna for leaving.



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-- Grier went to West Virginia, sat out 2016 season (as per transfer rules)...which created another stir – would he be able to start 2017 season or was he bypassing the punishment for his suspension by transferring and HAVING to sit out (while suspended). The NCAA ultimately granted him eligibility to start play in the 2017 season, and he became the West Virginia starter and had two impressive, highly productive seasons for the Mountaineers.

People tend to see the surface stories and dislike Grier. Coming from an affluent background, having brothers famous on the internet scares (for no good reason) tech-ignorant NFL head coaches and scouts (it did me when I first saw the headline/note on it), plus Grier has the high-profile suspension/transfer and is a low key personality (comes off as 'too cool' to some or 'doesn't care to others) with *super-cool/rebellious* long hair – Grier is everything, at a glance, that hardcore football people despise. NFL coaches like 'grinders' with crew cuts...and there is logic in having concern over his mindset with what he's showing the world. Grier has had a silver football/spoon in his mouth since day one.

Grier's background overshadows his on-field accomplishments – he's been terrific at WVU. 300+ yards passing in 19 of his 22 games as a Mountaineer. 71 TDs/20 INTs in 22 games. He's been pretty nice since his first game for West Virginia...and was a hit right away for Florida. People are going to say 'system QB' and point out **Geno Smith** (former high-output WVU QB) as knocks against Grier's achievements. 'System' was also used to try and ding **Baker Mayfield** and **Patrick Mahomes** entering the NFL.

Right now, Grier's headline background/famous brothers/'system' are all working against him...creating a dark cloud, a shadow over him. When I first looked at Grier this summer, I thought the same thing – solid QB, *but all this other mess*. Then, I looked into things a little deeper to prepare for my full scouting report for draft season – and I have to say, I'm pleasantly surprised by Grier's background. The deeper I dig, the more I realize none of the background noise makes sense – not in a case/claim to denigrate his QB talents.

Once you remove the surface, non-mattering noise...we're left with the simple question: *Is Grier a legit NFL QB prospect, future starter, franchise player or not?*

The more I dug into his background, the more positive I was on Grier. I have a great WVU contact, and my source raves about Grier's maturity, practice habits, persona. The more I looked, the more all the off-field noise – was just that...noise. Grier is not a diva. He's an even-keel, well-trained (by his football coach dad), family man QB (married with a child). He's not a long-haired, diva hippie that is too much into social media (he's not into social media fame, his brothers are – you can hardly tell Will exists on social media...except for things with him and his wife and young child). Grier is none of the things, so far as I can tell, that some might negatively portray him as.

Which still leaves the question – *how good a prospect for the NFL is he?*



In my opinion, and in our computer scouting model's opinion...he's pretty good. Stuck in 'pretty good'...not grading/showing signs of great, but not showing anything 'bad' either. He's not 'average'...he's definitely better than that. He's in an interesting spot – better than, perhaps, all the 2019 NFL Draft QB prospects, but not obviously 'great', not super-exciting overall. The problem with classifying him possibly stems from the fact we're suddenly spoiled as football fans and scouts. We're looking at a golden age of young QB play...Mahomes-Mayfield-Goff-differently-styled Lamar Jackson-and- 'winner' Dak Prescott -- and **Will Grier** isn't the QB you'd likely take over any of them. If you want your Mahomes or Mayfield...you're probably not finding it in Grier. However, he may be your best hope for it from the 2019 class...or you just 'pass' on taking 'pretty good' and hope better/great options arrive in 2020.

I watch Grier and I see a very good, mechanically sound quarterback. When I watch the tape, I'm never blown away, but I'm not writing down a bunch of negative notes either. He can make all the throws, per the cliché but it's true. He can read defenses. He seems to hang in the pocket under duress well. He can run a little...has enough mobility. Has a bunch of yards and TDs amassed against all levels of opponent, and maybe a hair too many INTs...but he also throws a lot of passes. His performance numbers, in our scouting models, show no red flag metrics. Everything is in order with Grier. I have a hard time finding a reason to ding Grier's scouting report.

You're getting a nice QB prospect and good human in **Will Grier**. He's just going to not grab your attention because he's not 'great'/eye-popping. I saw so much Mayfield-Mahomes-Goff-Trubisky the past few years, true greats and future greats of the game...it's hard to get my needle moving for Grier – and that shouldn't be held against him. But it is, deep in my mind, and I think the football mainstream is going to be nonplussed as well – as well as all the fake news surface stuff that will rub people the wrong way about his background.

### Will Grier, Through the Lens of Our QB Scouting Algorithm:

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22 games played at WVU, 21 full games (had one where he left the game early/just 8 passes thrown), and...

- Threw for 2 or more TDs in 20 of 21 games.
- Threw for 3 or more TDs in 16 of the 21 games.
- Threw for 4 or more TDs in 9 of the 21 games.
- Threw for 300+ yards in 19 of the 21 games.
- Threw for 330+ yards in 17 of the 21 games.



Nothing but production with nary a blip or bad game.

27 career games (at WVU and Florida) where he threw 15 or more passes and had a 21-6 win-loss record in those games.

Grier seems to have all the 'physical tools' boxes checked. He's above 6'2", probably around 220 pounds. He was a top dual threat QB in high school, but only ran when he had to in college. He's a pocket passer at heart but has decent feet...probably a 4.7+ runner (my early guesstimate). Seems to have the hand size and arm strength needed in the pros.

Grier may be an 'A' grade in nothing, but a 'B' in everything with no real 'C' or 'F' things. There's something to be said for a prospect that has little/no flaw or obvious 'red flag'. I have a scouting question/negative (maybe) on only one thing on Grier, and I'll get to it in the last section of this report.

### The Historical QB Prospects to Whom Will Grier Most Compares Within Our System:

A mixed bag of comps. You see **Sam Bradford** and rear back, but you see **Jared Goff** and you're like 'hmmm'. The perfect QB to stand between not-Bradford and not-Goff, in the NFL, is **Andy Dalton**...good, sometimes very good, an NFL 'winner' mostly, but not great/'wow'.

Really, Bradford-Dalton-Goff have a lot in common...all successful passers in college. All NFL-worthy. All tended to be guys the media and fans disliked early in their NFL careers and never stopped mocking them when they fell short. Something about their 'look' or lack of personality or non-mobility...there's a reason these guys tend not to get fans and media excited. They were about to run Goff out of the league after one year...and, now, he's one of the best QBs in the NFL. Was it Goff's destiny...or **Sean McVay's** special sauce? Imagine Goff playing QB for **Doug Marrone**...you'd hate Goff (just like we all hated him with the similar **Jeff Fisher**).

What if Grier lands 'bad' in the NFL? **Sam Bradford** got **Jeff Fisher** too...and died. **Andy Dalton** got stuck with awful **Marvin Lewis** and made the best of it but never got any better than 'good'.

What if Grier lands 'good' in the NFL? Maybe with **Pat Shurmur**/NYG? Or who knows what young offensive-minded coach might get a job and draft Grier because they need someone now?

Grier might be a lot like Bradford-Dalton-Goff...all 'good' QBs but they'll break good or bad in the NFL depending upon what franchise and coach they land with (and how healthy they are/how good their O-Line is).



<u>QB-Score</u>	<u>Name</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>
7.738	Grier	Will	2019	West Virginia	74.5	220	68.6%	15.2	9.0	26.9
10.657	Bradford	Sam	2010	Oklahoma	76.3	236	67.0%	13.4	10.3	34.3
9.059	Dalton	Andy	2011	TCU	74.0	215	65.3%	13.6	13.4	42.9
6.512	Hogan	Kevin	2016	Stanford	75.2	217	67.0%	13.4	13.2	38.0
9.013	Goff	Jared	2016	Cal	75.5	215	64.2%	13.2	14.3	39.4

\*“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:**

I think the sentiment is going to be against Grier in the NFL Draft, I can just feel it. I hope I'm wrong because he hasn't done anything wrong. He's done a lot of 'right'/good work in college. In a weak QB class, he deserves 1st-round consideration but he's not so obviously a 1st-rounder...not like Mayfield-Goff-Trubisky-Mahomes. I think he'll go between picks #25-60.

I see more Goff in Grier than any of the other big names I'm comparing him with, but I don't think he's as good as Goff. Both were very competent college QBs raised in the passing game era, so they can make it look easy – and they arrive in the NFL and the offenses can be restrictive and a regression from what they did in college but given a chance to sling it right away – they are not overwhelmed, they can succeed.

**If I were an NFL GM,** I would really wrestle with how to value Grier, but in the end, I'd pass because I'd want to find my Mahomes-Mayfield and I don't want to settle for less. If I were taking over an NFL team this year and rebuilding it and desperately needed a QB...Grier might force my hand because there may be no Mayfield-Mahomes in 2019...and then what if in 2020, after I pass on a Grier, no superstar prospect emerges -- then my team is dying for a QB for years and I'll be fired. I might be convinced to settle on Grier this year, and re-evaluating next year.



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There is one possible negative on Grier that might make me 'pass' on him, although maybe more one-on-one time with him would help rewire my thinking on it... But as a scout who won't get to talk to Grier one-on-one multiple times or hang out with him...I'm just a scout who only gets to study his on-field tape, pore over his interviews with others, take other people's word on him who might have some special insight, and examine his Wonderlic, etc. – I'm left to 'project'/guess/amateur psychoanalyze his personality based on all my years of evaluating these prospects. My fear is that Grier doesn't have the 'motor' of a franchise QB. I don't know how bad Grier wants to be a great football player. I'm not sure I'm dealing with a type-A, alpha dog leader here – and if I want that in my QB, as most NFL head coaches do, I may not get it here. Grier seems more low-key and smart enough to not make football his whole life...and that could be a problem for my football franchise.

**Jared Goff** worries me a little bit on that too...that he's a little too quiet/unassuming to lead my franchise for the next decade, but fortunately he has **Sean McVay** to lead the team/the offensive mindset. Grier seems to lean a little too laid back as well. It could be he's a silent assassin, like Goff. His college numbers are those of an assassin, but the NFL action is a different breed. **Dak Prescott** is less talented as a passer (than Grier), but is a leader, a winner, a bulldog. Are you willing to have a lower-key QB lead your franchise? Are you worried passive human means passive decision maker in crisis? Will he be too easy for players, coaches, and fans to 'turn' on and rattle (whereas **Baker Mayfield** gobbles that stuff up like rocket fuel)?

I'm having hard time loving Grier, but I'm also left saying to myself...'*but what's to dislike?*' Watching Mayfield-Mahomes in 2016-2017-2018 is really changing the landscape on how we all evaluate QBs. To some degree, it's unfair to all the incoming QBs to compare them to the gold standard – but don't we all want gold, not silver?

### NFL Outlook:

I have a feeling Grier might get taken in the late-first, early-second round by a team that already has a stable starter. If Grier falls, it will set up good NFL teams to smartly address their backup QB situation with something better than '*knows the offense*' but are awful performers like **Matt Cassel** or **Blaine Gabbert**, etc. It would be a great move by teams not in desperate need of a starting QB right now to set up the future while having an immediate talented backup in case of emergency (see: Dallas and **Tony Romo's** end...see: **Nick Foles**) – New England or Green Bay or even Atlanta are teams that should consider this if Grier doesn't catch a prospect wave as a top guy to grab for teams in immediate need.

Grier will likely be as good as where he lands – as is the case with so many prospects now, especially the QBs. Grier could start Week 1 and be fine for a rookie and develop...or he could sit behind a **Brady** or **Rodgers** for 3-4 years, and start to fade from memory, like the **Jimmy Garoppolo** story before he was traded.

