



NFL DRAFT 2017 SCOUTING REPORT: TE EVAN

ENGRAM, OLE MISS

**Our TE 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.*

***Our TE formulas had some slight changes in the offseason—an adjustment to better identify and value TE prospects that are smaller physically, and are primed for the era ahead...the era of Jordan Reed and Delanie Walker-type TEs. Our historical grades will have changed some on various prospects as well, to show their grades by comparison.*

I figured **Evan Engram** would run a pretty good time at the NFL Combine, but the 4.42 40-time was a bit of a stunner. It was backed up by a terrific (for a TE) 6.92 three-cone. The momentum for Engram being '*the next **Jordan Reed***' has been a drumbeat for weeks, and that 4.42 was rocket fuel for the Reed comps – '*better than Reed*' is now being discussed.

There's a problem with all this post-Combine Engram enthusiasm, however. The problem: **Evan Engram** is mostly a fraud prospect in the NFL Draft, as a tight end and probably as a wide receiver too. Give yourself a second to digest that because it flies in the face of what analysts have been pushing and what I have been excited about for weeks. I admit it – I got sucked in by the **Jordan Reed** comparisons; they made sense on the surface when I looked at basic tape. After more extensive study, I conclude that **Evan Engram** is not an easy 'next Reed' comparison.

Evan Engram really is '*a wide receiver masquerading as a tight end*'. I don't mean that simply because of his measurements (6'3"/234), which are more like an NFL WR than a TE. I mean watching Engram play for Ole Miss was like watching what would happen if you grabbed **Alshon Jeffery** or **Eric Decker** or **Kenny Britt** (guys off the top of my head) and told them to go start playing tight end...TE/WR hybrid.

Here are the problems with jamming a wide receiver prototype in as a tight end in the NFL...



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— Engram lined up as a quasi-TE/WR for Ole Miss in 2016 — about half the time lined up away from the line like a flanker and the other half of the time a step of two behind the O-Line in a ‘near’ tight end position...in between an H-back and tight end setup. I’m not sure I ever saw Engram on the line of scrimmage next to a tackle to do anything – block or go out for a pass.

There’s a reason I mention his alignment first...

Engram is a terrible, awful blocker. He’s a skinny tight end/normal-sized wide receiver with blocking skills and blocking desire of a typical wide receiver – meaning, ‘not interested’ in blocking. His blocks are mostly half-hearted lunges, dives at the feet, or him trying to be a wall and not doing a good job of it. He tries, but he fails. **Quincy Enunwa** is more of a tight end than **Evan Engram**...because Enunwa is built like a short tight end and he will maul you blocking. Engram is built like a regular wide receiver and he’d rather not get involved if he can help it.

— Because Engram has played as a WR/TE weapon at Ole Miss, most of his routes and experience have been as a tight end-ish option. He flared out of the backfield alignment for simple dump passes or a short squat in a spot about five yards from the LOS. He ran a lot of limited tight end-like routes so he’s not as ready to convert to WR.

If Engram runs tight end routes in the NFL – he’s going to get killed. His frame is not ideal for taking blows from linebackers and safeties with his back turned/him squatted flat foot over the middle (where he caught most of his college passes). You can’t run traditional tight end routes with Engram – he’s not close to that guy. **Quincy Enunwa** could/does. **Jordan Reed** can/does. Engram is not ready for that – I’m not sure he will ever be ready for that, physically.

— I’m not sure Engram is ready for tight end life from a mental standpoint either. I was shocked at how many passes I saw him drop on tape. He doesn’t have bad hands – that’s not the issue. The issue for him is catching the ball in traffic/under duress. He can catch fine. He’s not wonderful with his back turned to or being led into trouble...most WRs are not, but tight ends have to be. He was credited with like five drops last season in about 100 targets...I think it’s more drops than that. They were not ‘bad hands’ drops as much as ‘fear drops’, I think.



As I watched game after game, I had a thought on something and then really looked for it...and never really saw it. I was looking for Engram making a 'tough catch' in a game. It was rare/nonexistent. I watched Virginia Tech tight end **Bucky Hodges** make multiple '*fight for the ball*' catches every game. Engram might have had one or two '*battles won*' in a career. Most of Engram's action is slip out of the backfield into open space or shocking a 4.8 running defender with his 4.4 speed and creating the speed separation to make a catch. You won't find a highlight reel of 'tough catches' for Engram. You can deal with that looking at him as a WR prospect but not as a serious TE prospect.

— All of this bad Engram vibe caught me by surprise too. I was ready to stamp Engram's ticket to the Hall of Fame as a better Reed when I saw that 40-time. But I saw it all fall apart as I watched more tape. I went back and watched **Jordan Reed**'s Combine and a quick look at his final year of college tape and it was obvious – Reed has that raw tight end frame...you could see it. It made him look a little weird at wide receiver. **Evan Engram** looks like a wide receiver mistakenly called a tight end. You can see it in Reed's tape with his body/physique in two seconds. Reed has a thick lower body and broad shoulders...and wasn't a workout warrior, so he had bulk to add (and did). Engram is a more lean, already muscular...pushed his frame as far as it can go type of 234 pounds. He looks like he'd be more natural at 225 pounds, whereas Reed had room to grow/add bulk.

Now, not all is lost (after I just trashed Engram for several paragraphs). With Engram, you still have this stellar 6'3"/234 guy who has some tight end experience and runs a 4.42 40-time with terrific agility. We have a major weapon potential here. The problem is – who in the NFL is going to use it? Teams claim they want to have their own **Jordan Reed** (used to be **Aaron Hernandez**) and yet none of them really do...except for Washington with **Jordan Reed** and I guess **Delanie Walker**. Minnesota didn't know what to do with **MyCole Pruitt** (6'2"/251, 4.58 40-time). **Delanie Walker** wasted most of his career as a nobody with the 49ers. **Trey Burton** (6'2"/224, 4.62 40-time) is buried in Philadelphia.

What if **Evan Engram** really is the next **Jordan Reed**? What are the odds he gets used in such a way in the NFL? Low odds...

The NFL prefers beefy, three-down tight ends...and they adore blocking ability from a tight end. Engram is neither beefy nor a good blocker. A team taking Engram would



have to redesign their playbook for such a misfit/unique weapon. Guess what the odds are an offensive coordinator is changing their playbook for a skinny tight end who can't block and runs a 4.42? At best, Engram arrives at his new team and has 'special plays' drawn up for him...and then the plays really don't get called as much because it's not worked on enough in practice and then all the Engram excitement just fades away over 2-3-4 years. I hate to be so dire but I could see 'forgotten' as his likely career label. There is upside a team gets a hold of him and designs unique things for him, but I'm not sure he's built for being given a special status in the passing game. In reality, he might get converted to wide receiver by year three in the NFL. We really should scout him more as a wide receiver.

As a WR prospect, he'd be interesting – a 6'3"/234 guy with 4.42 wheels? You love that. Cut him down to 225 pounds...and maybe he's a 4.37 runner? Now, you have some freaky athleticism. That potential alone is worth claiming Engram in the draft at some point. The problem is – Engram would have to learn wide receiver routes, etc. on the fly in the NFL and then you still have the question of whether he's aggressive enough a receiver to matter. His speed at 220-225 pounds might really matter.

Engram is a good kid/man by all accounts. There are no red flags on character. Good grades in school and donates time to charitable events. Listening to him in interviews, he's a just a good/nice dude. I hope this all works out for him but I have a feeling he's in for a rude awakening in the NFL. What teams/coaches he falls in with means everything with him.

Evan Engram, through the lens of our TE Scouting Algorithm

I don't know that there is much about Engram's college output that lends itself to clues about his NFL future. His 2016 numbers were quite impressive...excellent for a tight end, but he wasn't really a tight end. He wasn't really a wide receiver either, but more WR than TE. It's hard to classify him or put his production into any proper historical context. Let's just say – he was 'really good' in his final year. Very productive and showed up in every game. All we can do as a scout is try to fit his skillset into the pros...and I think it worked better in college than it will in the pros.



Trying to project him as a wide receiver on tape when he got the benefit of being covered by a lot of linebackers and safeties in his career gets complicated. The physical tools are obvious. It's a guess at how they would work at the next level.

NFL Combine data...

6'3.3"/243, 33.5" arms, 10.0" hands

4.42 40-time, 6.92 three-cone, 4.23 shuttle

10'5" broad jump, 36.0" vertical, 19 bench reps

Evan Engram college stats on Fox Spots: <http://www.foxsports.com/college-football/evan-engram-player-stats>

The NFL TE that Evan Engram most compares to statistically in college, within our system:

Ahh, **Derek Carrier**. Born too soon. One of the highest-rated tight ends our system produced because our system was looking for guys like **Aaron Hernandez** and **Jordan Reed** before it was 'a thing'. Actually, Hernandez kinda spurred the logic. Carrier was a stud WR/TE for tiny Beloit College, and he had a sensational Pro Day. From a measurables standpoint Carrier was Engram five or so years ago – 6'3"/238 and ran a 4.50 with unreal agility (for a TE) with a 40" vertical. It all made sense...except for the small school part. He went undrafted. Oakland tried him out as a WR. Philly signed him and moved him to TE, then WR, then back to TE...then Washington grabbed him. Smart. The Redskins possessed **Jordan Reed** and **Derek Carrier**...two very '*Jordan Reed*' tight ends. Carrier kept bulking up and slimming down in his career and had moments in the preseason but never caught on as a passing game threat. When given the chance in the regular season he was OK but he never got much of a chance...and has had major injuries on and off as well. I fear the Carrier fate awaits Engram...although, we're in an era now where people are more open to the smaller, speedy tight end.



Table 387

TE score	TE-Reed	Last	First	Yr	College	H	H	Weight	Speed Agility Metric	Strength Blocking Metric	Hands Metric
7.603	10.66	Engram	Evan	2017	Ole Miss	6	3.3	234	14.59	3.16	8.38
7.652	10.79	Carrier	Derek	2012	Beloit	6	3.3	238	13.23	5.05	10.01
7.765	9.91	Miller	Zach	2009	Neb-Omaha	6	3.6	233	9.82	2.99	8.40
4.169	7.87	Konz	Jameson	2010	Kent State	6	3.4	234	13.72	3.95	5.97
6.673	8.88	Reed	Kyler	2013	Nebraska	6	2.1	225	13.53	2.05	6.54
9.094	12.45	Keller	Dustin	2008	Purdue	6	2.1	242	11.95	7.97	9.17

A score of **7.0+ is where we start to take a TE prospect more seriously. A score of **8.50+** is where we see a stronger correlation of TEs 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 TE.*

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

***The 'TE-Reed' score is in honor of Jordan Reed's 2015 season...looking at TEs in a different manner—the smaller, speedy receiving threats.*

"Speed-Agility Metric" = 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.

"Power-Strength Metric" = 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.

"Hands Metric" = 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 project the combination of data for receiving success at the next level.

2017 NFL Draft outlook...

You usually see **Evan Engram** parked in the second round of mock drafts, mostly in the first 15-20 picks of the second. I could see mock drafters pushing Engram into the late first being led (to slaughter) with his '4.42' 40-time. It's not crazy to want to get your hands on the 6'3"/243 guy that runs 4.42. On a certain level, it makes a lot of sense. However, I think when teams do their homework they'll see he's not what they think/hope and coaches will turn their nose up at him for not being enough like a traditional TE. I think he will go late second to a team who hopes to use him as a special weapon...and then really doesn't. Hopefully, for his sake, I'm wrong. I see him going pick #50-70 overall.

NFL Outlook: I could say "It's all about what team he lands with" on every one of my scouting reports. In this case, it's beyond true. Engram is not a plug and play weapon – you have to design an offense for his skillset. If the NFL doesn't, he'll

