



NFL Draft 2014 Scouting Report: WR Brandin Cooks, Oregon State

**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 less typically 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.*

There are five bigger-name NFL WRs that come to mind when our computer tries to compare **Brandin Cooks** to similar WR prospects from the past. These five names will likely be used in national draft analysis as well: **Steve Smith**, **DeSean Jackson**, **Percy Harvin**, **T.Y. Hilton**, and **Tavon Austin**. Your 'feelings' on these five WRs will somewhat dictate how you should feel about Cooks.

For some, those five names represent 'stars' and therefore, Cooks must be a future star. For others, those comparison names represent smaller, oft-injured type of WRs...a nice WR to have, sometimes uber-electric, but not a franchise changing WR in the **Calvin Johnson** or **Julio Jones** vein.

Each of the five comparison WRs mentioned elicits a different reaction. Smith as more of a power/physical WR, despite his diminutive height. Jackson can be absolutely electric, but also disappears often...as well as is often banged up. Harvin is one of the greats...when he is playing, and that hasn't been often the last two years. Hilton is much like DJax in that he is a home-run hitter on game, then a ghost for weeks before his next lightning strike. Austin was the darling of the 2013 NFL Draft, and then immediately became **DeSean Jackson**-lite...a few scattered electric moments, but more nothing than not, and oft-banged up.

So who is **Brandin Cooks** really like? Our computer models suggest Cooks is a better NFL WR prospect than all of the five names we've been discussing, except Harvin.

Keeping this comparison to just these six names (the five NFL'ers + Cooks), we would downgrade the names of **Tavon Austin** and **DeSean Jackson** in a comparison to Cooks because of their more diminutive size. All of these WRs are 'small', but Austin and Jackson are anorexic among the group at 170 +/- pounds; while the others weigh in at 180+ pounds. Those extra 10-pounds mean a lot on a small frame in an ever 'growing' NFL.

We would also move **T.Y. Hilton** aside as lesser than Cooks. Hilton is a WR who comes into this debate with more red-flags physically. Hilton has a troublingly small hand-size, along with much more



FEBRUARY 27, 2014

problematic agility readings (on paper). He is a blazer straight-line, like everyone on the list, but in agility terms, Hilton is not as swift/shifty as the other WRs mentioned.

Which leaves us with **Steve Smith** and **Percy Harvin**. I could probably say that Cooks is a bit of a hybrid of the two, or maybe a slightly less, poor man's version of them both. Smith as the most physically powerful of the three. Harvin as an athlete of rare, elite proportions. Cooks is close to both on those accounts. Cooks has the high end speed of **Tavon Austin**, but in a bigger body. Cooks has the agility of a **Percy Harvin**, but is a little smaller overall, and just a shade behind in strength. Harvin has a more perfect frame coming in (height-weight-bench press-legs), but Cooks is not too far behind.

In the end, we would propose that Cooks is better in talent and build than Hilton, Jackson, Austin, and more in the range of **Steve Smith**, but a shade under **Percy Harvin**. Cooks is somewhere better than the average of this group. It's not unreasonable to say he could be the best of this group...and that should excite fans for his NFL projections.

Cooks is everything you wanted out of **Tavon Austin**, but didn't get. Cooks is bigger by 1"+ in height and 15+ pounds with the same approx. speed and agility measurements. Cooks has bigger hands, longer arms, and more overall athleticism than Austin. Both played in high-octane offenses, but Cooks had better raw numbers, as well as superior performance when we considered strength of opponent. He is the **Tavon Austin** you wanted.

I watch Cooks on tape and am more impressed with him over Austin or Hilton, et al. All the guys we are discussing are super-fast, and Cooks has the same breakaway speed moments as well. Dump a simple bubble screen to Cooks, and it might turn into a 80+ yard TD...just like with Austin, Harvin, Hilton, etc. Cooks separates away a little bit from all but Harvin-Smith in that he has a bigger frame. He'll take a hit better. He'll work over the middle more. He is more apt to fight off a pack for a jump ball. He has more well-rounded WR instincts, to me, than a **Tavon Austin** or **DeSean Jackson** who rely more upon raw speed as their main trick. In that sense, Cooks is more like **Steve Smith**...you can use him in a short game, but he'll also beat you deep and fight for jump balls.

Cooks has no blemish on his off-field record; by all accounts, he is a model citizen and a great locker room guy. Besides being a top football player, he was also a standout on the track team at Oregon State. In high school, he was a Junior Olympics sprinter. It has been noted in his OSU bio that he has never missed a game at any level.

Our system has graded many "Small-WRs" over the years. Cooks is as good-great as any of them, and has upside from where we graded him. About the only 'thing' we can ding him for is that he is touch small at 5'9.6", you'd like to see him just a little taller, but that's being nit-picky. He is a great, lethal prospect for the NFL. He was the **Tavon Austin** everyone was hoping for last year...available this year.



Brandin Cooks, Through the Lens of Our WR Scouting Algorithm:

You would expect some amped up output numbers on a team that threw the ball 600+ times this season, but even within that context Cooks had a tremendous season. Cooks had 128 catches in 2013, which led Oregon State...and the next closest player was a WR **Richard Mullaney** with 52. Cooks had 16 receiving TDs in 2013, and the rest of the Oregon State WR/TE group caught 17 TD passes. The world knew **Brandin Cooks** was getting the ball, and the world was powerless to stop it. Cooks accounted for 1,947 yards rushing and receiving, and scored two rushing TDs on top of his 16 receiving TDs.

There is no flaw within Cooks' 2013 output. Almost 10 catches per game, and his lowest amount of receptions in a game was seven. Cooks had 80 or more yards in 12 of 13 games played. He also eight 100+ yard games (and another game with 99 yards). If you add receiving and rushing yards together, Cooks never had one game in 2013 with less than 89 yards produced.

Cooks not only racked up a lot of catches and yards, he also scored 18 TDs this past season...at least one TD in 10 of 13 games in 2013.

Cooks has no major physical flaws except that he is a just a touch shorter than you'd like from a WR. He is a 4.33 40-time runner (a tick faster than Austin at the Combine). He also had top-level agility, a nice 10-yard split, solid vertical, big hands and impressive bench press (16 reps) for his size. He is NFL-ready day-one.

The Historical WR Prospects to Whom Brandin Cooks Most Compares Within Our System:

I would take the first three names listed and throw them into a blender and then compare **Brandin Cooks** to that WR smoothie. He has a little bit of Harvin-Moss-Smith, but is not definitively like any of them. He is the bigger, badder **Tavon Austin**. He is the quicker, less injury-prone **T.Y. Hilton**. He is a quicker **Steve Smith**. He is the smaller **Percy Harvin**.



<u>WR Score</u>	<u>Draft Yr</u>	<u>Last</u>	<u>First</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>Power Strngth Metric</u>	<u>Speed Agility Metric</u>	<u>Hands Metric</u>
10.03	2014	Cooks	Brandin	Oregon St	5	9.6	189	8.09	15.22	10.53
13.56	2009	Harvin	Percy	Florida	5	11.1	192	9.25	12.93	9.33
7.95	2001	Moss	Santana	Miami, Fla	5	10.0	181	7.23	16.36	7.72
8.75	2001	Smith	Steve	Utah	5	9.0	184	8.45	4.18	9.24
8.93	2010	Roberts	Andre	Citadel	5	10.7	195	8.59	12.44	10.59
7.56	2010	Sanders	Emmanuel	SMU	5	11.0	186	6.40	13.75	8.25
6.17	2013	Austin	Tavon	West Va	5	8.4	174	3.84	15.29	7.89
4.16	2008	Jackson	DeSean	California	5	9.8	169	3.07	13.51	6.42
2.00	2012	Hilton	T.Y.	Fla Int'l	5	9.5	183	3.93	10.56	8.27

**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.

2014 NFL Draft Outlook:

