



NFL Draft 2014 Scouting Report: QB Teddy Bridgewater, Louisville

**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.*

2.0 update: 4/12/14 (the original report is below this update)

Well, now we have a game-changing piece of data...a virtual grenade lobbed into the fox hole in my world. **Teddy Bridgewater** has reportedly scored a 20 on his Wonderlic test...and that is 'not good'.

This becomes a battle of my eyes versus our scouting formulas that have worked pretty well on QBs the past couple of years. When push comes to shove...I will not trust my eyes over 'the system'. Eyes lie more than our data.

I am not going to write a novel here about the Wonderlic and its meaning in the football universe. Google my name/FFM + Wonderlic and you'll get plenty of an eyeful of what we think about the Wonderlic test, and the relationship to QB scouting. For more perspective, I have another Wonderlic piece that will be out on Fantasy Football Metrics about the same time as this updated Bridgewater report posts.

The short version is: The Wonderlic test does have an impact, especially on players who score lower on the test. In a sense, Bridgewater did not just have a 'shaky' result, he nearly bombed it. That's not good for our grading of him. We have several pieces of conflicting data.

- With my eyes, I see a great college QB. One, who I think will do well in the NFL.
- Statistically, Bridgewater had a couple of sensational seasons the past two years at Louisville.
- Physically, he is not a great prospect. He's 'OK', but not prototypical. Smaller frame, and a smaller than expected hand-size (official numbers received from the NFL Combine after this initial report was written).
- Now we have his 'whiff' on the Wonderlic...and now we have a problem.

Bridgewater's scouting profile comes into view as an 'A' grade college performer, 'C' physical profile, 'D' decision-maker. There have been a ton of nifty college QBs, who destroyed the NCAA, and then went onto be nothing in the NFL. **Kellen Moore** and **Case Keenum**, are a couple of recent QBs who come to mind. It is somewhat 'normal', not shocking, for a QB to 'look' good in college and flop to nothing in the pros.



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The storm clouds had been gathering for Bridgewater's mental makeup in pre-draft activities. His Pro Day was not planned out very well. His Pro Day performance was a little overblown by the media, but the planning effort was not spectacular...there was no energy or excitement in the building. His TV interviews have been unpolished, and skittish. Those may seem like nit-picking, non-football-related events to worry about, but everything matters in the NFL Draft evaluation. When Bridgewater starts dropping clues that maybe he is not as sharp as you'd hope, and then the Wonderlic test results is a dud...scouting panic has to begin.

I write the word 'panic' for a reason. I am still intrigued by Bridgewater as an NFL QB talent. He was too good in college, statistically and on tape to be a complete washout. My 'panic' arrives when you consider Bridgewater as a top-10 type of draft pick candidate. You want to be 'in love' with a 1st-round QB. I can no longer be in love with Bridgewater. I can be in 'like', but not in love. I have doubts now. Serious doubts, from the perspective of a top-overall pick standpoint. I'd like to take a shot, but I am much less enthusiastic about it now.

I wanted to believe Bridgewater was getting a 'bad rap', and that he was going to surprise the masses with a nice mental acumen that would match his on-field excitement. With the low Wonderlic results, I now have to believe I was wrong. I have to start doubting Bridgewater more than defend him.

There is no way Bill O'Brien is making Bridgewater his pick at #1 overall. The one QB we thought had some future elite tendencies and data trends, has been all but wiped away with official size measurements and the Wonderlic score. Before this, I would have considered Bridgewater a top-5, potentially #1 overall draft pick (given the importance of a QB). Now, I have serious doubt. Now, I would consider grabbing one of my 1-2-3 true top prospects with a top-10 pick, bypassing Bridgewater, and taking a QB in the 2nd-round...versus betting the farm on Bridgewater in the first ten or so picks.

I think the NFL will take note of his Wonderlic score as well. They've had this score, and thus he has faded for weeks for a variety of reasons...this was obviously one of them. Now we are all finding this info out. I still feel Bridgewater will go in the 1st-round, because QB is just that important, but I think there is no way he goes #1, and there is no way he goes top-5. I would not be shocked if he slid out of the top 15-20. I don't think he will escape the 1st-round...QB is just too important. NFL teams will love the tape enough to overlook the Wonderlic...and there are teams that discount/ignore the Wonderlic, which would keep them in love still.

We think NFL 'star' is off the table now with Bridgewater. Capable, sure. Good at times, OK. Elite, franchise QB, seems impossible now.

It may seem crazy to discount a QB so much for size and Wonderlic tests, and to throw the eyeball test way in the backdrop. Our whole thesis of College Football Metrics is not to trust our eyes, but to trust the data. Several pieces of data make up our grading system, a system which is looking for high-probable, future elite QBs or future busts. Bridgewater is in neither camp for us. He is not a bust in waiting, nor is he a high-probable franchise QB. We see 'good' at best, with more of a pull toward



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solid/OK, and 'bust' is on the table, but not likely...where 'bust' possibilities had almost no chance before. That scares me, and it has to scare any NFL team making this pick.

There is now risk with **Teddy Bridgewater**.

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Original report from 1/3/2014:

I wish I wasn't as agreeable on this, but we feel **Teddy Bridgewater** is the most talented QB available in the 2014 NFL Draft--and most scouts and analysts agree...as does our computer scouting model (so far). I wish I had something more dazzling and unique, but I am down with the masses here.

Many football people will comment that Bridgewater is "**Russell Wilson-like**." Because he is a shorter, fairly mobile, highly accurate and college successful--the comparison is almost too easy. I'd love to come up with a more radical comparison, but the very first time I studied him on tape and in number's study (in 2013)...I thought, "*Oh, it's another **Russell Wilson**.*"

It's **Russell Wilson** the passer, not necessarily the **Russell Wilson** the runner. Let me explain...

When watching tape of Bridgewater, I could tell pretty quickly he was a different QB from most young QBs. His accuracy, and decision-making as a passer are amazing. I'd argue that Bridgewater might be a better, more accurate passer, with better instincts than **Russell Wilson**. The Bridgewater intangibles of finding the open man after multiple progressions, throwing over the middle successfully/without fear, and hitting receivers in stride, or with perfect placement is stellar. He's "Best in Class" among 2014 QBs as a passer...and on par, or better than his similar comparison with Wilson.

Because Bridgewater is athletic with great escape ability, people equate him with Wilson or even **RG3**. He's not a runner on their level instinctually. He has very good speed and agility, but he is a more pure pocket-passer, and more reticent to take off running.

Let's compare **Russell Wilson**, **Andrew Luck**, and **Teddy Bridgewater** in their college career as runners (remember, sacks count as rushing attempts in college):

8.9 attempts, 28.4 yds per game, 23 rush TDs, 10 games with 50+ yds rushing = **Wilson** (50 games)

4.3 attempts, 25.1 yds per game, 7 rush TDs, 7 games with 50+ yds rushing = **Luck** (38 games)

5.8 attempts, **4.4 yds per game**, 6 rush TDs, 2 games with 50+ yds rushing = **Bridgewater** (39 games)



The rushing output comparison is startling...it is no comparison. Most would believe that Bridgewater runs on par with Wilson--not so in college.

To keep the Luck-Wilson-Bridgewater vibe going, here are their career per game passer metrics:

29.8 pass attempts, 60.9%, 234.4 yards, 2.2 TD/0.6 INT = **Wilson** (50 games)

28.0 pass attempts, 65.9%, 248.2 yards, 2.2 TD/0.6 INT = **Luck** (38 games)

29.2 pass attempts, 68.3%, 251.7 yards, 1.8 TD/0.6 INT = **Bridgewater** (39 games)

300+ yard passing games (career):

1 every 3.0 games = **Bridgewater**

1 every 3.8 games = **Wilson**

1 every 4.2 games = **Luck**

3 or more passing TDs (career):

1 every 2.5 games = **Luck**

1 every 2.8 games = **Wilson**

1 every 3.9 games = **Bridgewater**

In general, in their careers and in their best college seasons, Luck, Wilson, and Bridgewater all compare favorably as elite passers.

A bigger difference between the trio, besides the running output, is their physical size. Luck is 6'4" and 230+, and neither Wilson or Bridgewater compare to Luck physically...which is why no one speaks of any Luck-Bridgewater comparison; just Wilson-Bridgewater.

Bridgewater gets categorized as "short," but he is potentially as tall as **Aaron Rodgers** at 6'2". Bridgewater is about 3+ inches taller than Wilson. The huge Bridgewater-Wilson physical gap is in frame/weight/mass. Wilson is 205+ pounds packed into a 5'10" frame--he is built like a free safety. Bridgewater is likely 6'2" and 205-215 pounds...with much less muscular definition. He's is more 'wiry' than compact...which is how people classify Wilson--"compact." Bridgewater is built more like a skinnier 4th-WR in the NFL.



With all those 'wiry' statements, I am sure you are thinking about the additional injury risk...I am too. Bridgewater may officially measure with the same height as **RG3**, but weighs 20+ pounds less. If you think **RG3** is an injury-risk because of his body-type, and the shots he takes, then 'on paper' you should fear it for Bridgewater even more.

Injury fears aside, Bridgewater is a brilliant QB. I mean deceptively, and exceptionally brilliant. Last year, I referred to him as a **John Stockton** or **Magic Johnson** type of QB...he always puts the ball in the right spot, and always elevates everyone else around him in the offense. Pure talent as a passer, Bridgewater is the best there is in 2014.

Teddy Bridgewater, Through the Lens of Our QB Scouting Algorithm:

I'm not sure what we could add to Bridgewater's junior/2013 season results. He completed 71.0% of his passes, threw for over 300+ yards per game, and 31 TD/4 INTs (Wilson threw for 72.8% completion percentage, for 226.8 yards per game and 33 TD/4 INT in 14 games his final season).

Bridgewater's toughest opponent and the crowning jewel performance in his career was in the 2012-13 season, as a huge underdog in the Sugar Bowl against a top defensive unit in Florida. Bridgewater was amazing, toying with Florida at times--jumping out to a 24-3 lead, and eventually winning by 10 points, while completing 62.5% of his passes for 266 yards, 2 TD/1 INT. The numbers in that game were not astounding per se, but his command of the team and the offense against a superior opponent was special to watch. In his last 15 starts, Bridgewater sports a 14-1 record. He's 23-3 in the last two seasons combined...losing one of them in OT (UConn 2012), and another in the last second (Central Florida 2013).

In Louisville's three losses in the past two seasons, Bridgewater's per game numbers are better than his career or final season pace. In those three losses, he has posted: 67.9% Comp. Pct., 365.3 yards passing per game, with 7 TD/2 INT.

The only metric that is troubling on Bridgewater is his official size. If he is under 6'2", or if he is under 200-pounds, or if he also has smaller hands--will it limit his draft stock? Does his size pose an injury risk for the most important piece of a franchise (the QB)? We'll see how he measures at the NFL Combine.



The Historical QB Prospects to Whom Teddy Bridgewater Most Compares Within Our System:

(4/12 update) Bridgewater is becoming a poor man's **RG3**. Both talented QBs, definitely not flops. However, Bridgewater is not as fast, is not as 'special' with the deep ball, is a little smaller all over, and was a little worse in the Wonderlic.

RG3 is a 'B' QB with 'A' athleticism, and perhaps a 'D' mental makeup. Bridgewater is a 'B+' QB with 'B-/C+' athleticism and perhaps that same 'D' mental makeup.

Original Comment: Our computer models see Bridgewater as a more accurate passer version of **Donovan McNabb**. The both have similar physical builds/frames, and are mobile enough QBs...but they do not run as their primary weapon. Bridgewater is the better, more polished version of McNabb to our system.

The **Russell Wilson** comparison stays true as well, but Wilson is a much more dynamic weapon as a runner in our system, with both being high-quality passers.

<u>QB Grade</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>
8.230	Bridgewater, Ted	2014	Louisville	74.1	214	71.7%	12.6	14.6	81.0
10.032	Griffin III, Robert	2012	Baylor	74.1	220	69.3%	15.6	11.7	57.3
8.567	Kolb, Kevin	2007	Houston	75.1	218	64.1%	13.8	15.5	256.3
4.747	Cameron, Colby	2013	La Tech	73.3	205	68.1%	11.4	16.9	48.2
6.138	Osiecki, Ryan	2013	New Haven	74.6	220	69.0%	13.5	11.6	46.4

*“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 onto 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 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.



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2014 NFL Draft Outlook:

Original January Comments: Bridgewater is too talented of a QB not to go top-5 overall, and probably goes as the #1 or #2 overall pick in 2014. However, I'm not 100% sure he would be the Houston Texans' cup o' tea under **Bill O'Brien**. I suspect O'Brien would rather have a taller, more physical presence at QB. I could be wrong there. However, Bridgewater would thrive in the NFL more in a modified version of the 'Pistol' like **Russell Wilson** does...it would make him that much more dangerous, because he has the tools to run the ball; he just doesn't prefer to do so. Sticking Bridgewater in a more traditional passing game will probably look as flat/boring as injured **RG3** did at times this season.


In the end, we would project that Bridgewater will go #1 or #2 overall, whether that is with Houston (or other), or another team trades with St. Louis to take him. We would also project that Bridgewater will be a successful QB in the NFL; possibly an elite. The only risk in the equation is how much does his smaller frame scare anyone on an injury risk with him as the franchise QB?

If I were the Texans' GM, and because of the fear of Bridgewater's physical frame, and the availability of something like a Jadeveon Clowney, I would be losing sleep over the decision.

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