



Scouting Report: QB Baker Mayfield, 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.*

What did you know or suspect you knew about **Baker Mayfield** coming into this 2018 NFL Draft process in January 2018?

- Heisman Trophy winner.
- The arrest video where he was tackled into a concrete mini-wall.
- The groin grab and taunting towards the Kansas players.
- Purposefully threw the ball at a TCU player in warm-ups.
- Classified 'too small' to be considered on the level with Rosen-Darnold.
- Arrogant, brash, **Johnny Manziel**-ish.

I think that probably covers it.

I had not seen one second of Mayfield on tape, but I knew all those things listed above. All of them forming a picture of a college-good, college-punk QB who will probably not translate to the NFL and a guy who NFL coaches will hate because of his arrogance. I came to the party pre-disliking Mayfield.

However, I've watched/studied Darnold-Rosen-Rudolph-Jackson-Allen for our early draft reports – and I think I'd take **Baker Mayfield** over all of them. *I know...I'm shocked at myself too.* Before you get too excited...you have to read the reports on the other top guys to put it into context, but I am pro-Mayfield to some degree.

Let me talk about Mayfield the on-field QB and then I'll move to the off-field stuff, which is an issue.

On the field, I think he has the best 'it' factor of the top-name QB group this season. I don't see him as a for-sure 'can't miss' NFL star or elite prospect, but he's better for the NFL than given credit. Mayfield is what people think **Sam Darnold** is...they think Darnold is this rough, raw, strong-armed sometimes sloppy QB who just 'makes plays' and is a QB worthy of a #1 draft pick/face of a franchise. Mayfield is much tougher, makes better/more plays, and is less erratic with a better arm...much better overall QB instincts than Darnold. Darnold has faster feet...other than that -- 'check' for Mayfield in all the other QB attributes compared to Darnold (except height).



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Mayfield reminds me a little of **Derek Carr** – incredibly fast release and a quick decision maker surveying the field. A guy who could walk right in and produce fine in the NFL...he's well prepared as a thrower for the NFL. He's incredibly efficient and has great natural instincts...like a smaller **Dak Prescott**.

Every game I watched/studied with Mayfield is the same – never overwhelmed, seemingly never has a bad game or even a bad series. He's efficient, accurate, and aggressive...and has a giant chip on his shoulder. I hate when people say that about players...but Mayfield may have the biggest chip of all time.

I have to be honest – I love that chip with Mayfield. Consider his journey... Walk-on at Texas Tech. Gets in to play right away as a true freshman. Plays well/up and down in a handful of starts but is then unceremoniously replaced mid-season by **Davis Webb** (who would later be unceremoniously replaced by Patrick Mahomes) and there is a QB controversy of sorts. Mayfield thinks he's the best QB and has seized the job...and they give it to the bigger/taller, more polished, higher-rated recruit **Davis Webb**.

Mayfield is so pissed by the way he was treated by Texas Tech (right or wrong) that he decides to transfer. He applies for a waiver to play immediately without sitting out a transfer year because he was never on scholarship at Texas Tech...he was denied by the NCAA. Oklahoma welcomes him in, he sits out a year, and then he climbs to the top of the depth chart and starts for three seasons and wins a Heisman in 2017. The short, chubby kid (as Mayfield has described himself) that Texas Tech didn't want...goes to a bigger school and wins a Heisman. Along the way, he is arrested in Arkansas for fleeing a cop's directive to stop walking away. He was crucified on every sports talk for grabbing his crotch and pointing towards Kansas players in a bitter cheap shot war last season. He's reached the top of the mountain for college play (a Heisman), against all odds...and now they say he can't make it in the pros – too short, too hotheaded, too immature, too much a system guy, etc.

When I set out to study Mayfield's character issues, I was pre-prepared to hate him. Running from the cops? Crotch-grabbing? Short QB? As I studied more of his story and watched interviews...I have to tell you...I kinda liked him. Fell in love with him as a 'Rudy'-esque underdog story. It's weird. I usually draw a hard line on the character issue, but for some reason with Mayfield it's doesn't seem as bad as it was painted, kinda understandable in the Kansas game ordeal, and somewhat endearing...the lovable scamp. The junkyard dog you kinda fall in love with. The kind of kid/guy that if **Connor McGregor** said something nasty to him in a bar, Mayfield would fight him on the spot and not be afraid. Mayfield would get his ass kicked, but then 100% believe he could take him the next time they fought. Mayfield is somewhere between tough and too dumb to know his limitations.

Actually, it just hit me – **Baker Mayfield** is 'Tommy' (Joe Pesci) from *Goodfellas*. Short in height, short-tempered, funny-looking (compared to other tall, chiseled QBs), funny-how?...but you don't want to tell him to go home and get his shine box. He doesn't shine shoes no more. I'm guessing 90%+ of you reading this loved *Goodfellas* the movie. You also adored Joe Pesci's character...a quick-tempered murderer (just ask Spider) and crook – you're supposed to hate him, in theory, but you kinda liked him. Something about him. That's **Baker Mayfield** for me.



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I have a better parallel – Mayfield is the modern-day **Jim McMahon**. Only McMahon had an ego. Mayfield is just a bulldog...a guy who some people hate, but who his teammates would kill for – and in a war, Mayfield would be on the frontline first. He plays QB with a middle linebacker's mindset but is actually a really good quarterback.

Some NFL teams will shy away from Mayfield because of the off-field stuff, and I can't fault them for that...but somebody is going to get a blossoming leader of men, a guy who will be the most resilient, determined tough guy face of a franchise in a sport all about 'tough guys'. If **Case Keenum** was a better QB and two times as tough...you have **Baker Mayfield**. He might be in jail before his rookie contract expires...but Mayfield might also be the best QB prospect in the 2018 NFL Draft.

Baker Mayfield, Through the Lens of Our QB Scouting Algorithm:

In his last 23 games, Mayfield has not posted an individual game where he either (1) threw for under 60.0% completion percentage in a game (last two seasons he's averaged over 70%), (2) had equal/more INTs than TDs thrown, or (3) threw for more than 1 (2 or more) interceptions in the game. By comparison, in their last/final 23 games in college...

Sam Darnold = under 60% in 5 games, equal/more INTs than TDs 6 times, more than 1 INT in a game 5 times.

Josh Rosen = under 60% in 12 games, equal/more INTs than TDs 5 times, more than 1 INT in a game 6 times.

Mason Rudolph = under 60% in 6 games, equal/more INTs than TDs 4 times, more than 1 INT in a game 4 times.

Josh Allen = under 60% in 15 games, equal/more INTs than TDs 6 times, more than 1 INT in a game 5 times.

Lamar Jackson = under 60% in 13 games, equal/more INTs than TDs 5 times, more than 1 INT in a game 3 times.

When you consider Mayfield has avoided such statistical issues for almost two seasons...it's stunning. Looking at that against the backdrop of the other top-name QB prospects tallies in these three statistical categories ...I don't know how people so easily dismiss Mayfield compared to these other guys. Because he's short? FYI...he may be shorter but he's way the heck better at playing quarterback. Don't say 'system' either...they all come from some kind of 'system' or another advantage.

By comparison to recent young, successful NFL QBs (from D1 play)...



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Jared Goff = under 60% in 6 games, equal/more INTs than TDs 4 times, more than 1 INT in a game 3 times.

Dak Prescott = under 60% in 9 games, equal/more INTs than TDs 6 times, more than 1 INT in a game 3 times.

Marcus Mariota = under 60% in 3 games, equal/more INTs than TDs 1 time, more than 1 INT in a game 2 times.

Deshaun Watson = under 60% in 3 games, equal/more INTs than TDs in 5 times, more than 1 INT in a game 6 times.

Look at the names above, the tallies they have...and knowing how impossible it is to have such an extended run of EFFICIENCY (debatable to call it 'excellence'...but maybe). **Baker Mayfield** is either a very 'lucky' quarterback or a very good one.

Also, to consider, in order for Mayfield to have that kind of efficiency he's had to have produced against all comers, all levels of opponents. So many times, supposed great QB prospects wail on losing teams and flounder against bowl teams and top teams. Mayfield is running with 'quality' over all opponents...not 50+ throws a game of accumulation. He throws the ball about 25-35 times a game, drops 2 or more TDs and doesn't turn the ball over.

Other top QB prospects arrive to the draft dance with gaudy numbers on a hellacious amount of throws, or they are cool dual-threat rackers of numbers. Mayfield is really the only top-name QB prospect that arrives to possible 1st-round draft pick status due to being a high-quality, highly efficient quarterback. It's tough for our minds to wrap around because his off-field persona does not seem high quality or efficient...it seems more reckless. As an on-field QB, Mayfield is the opposite of his off-field persona.

What will hold Mayfield back in the QB debates are his height and foot speed (plus the off-field). I would guess Mayfield about 6'1"-ish...at the Heisman ceremony he looked identically tall next to **Lamar Jackson**...and people push Jackson as 6'3", which means he's 6'2" at best. I think people will be a little surprised with Mayfield's height (or shocked and dismayed at Jackson's).



The Historical QB Prospects to Whom Baker Mayfield Most Compares Within Our System:

I love our system’s **Andy Dalton** and **Russell Wilson** comparisons on Mayfield.

The Dalton one because he was so efficient in college and in the pros, and mostly a winner, and not the right size or personality, had red hair...or whatever reason football people despise him – yet, Dalton has been a winner and great most of his college and NFL career. Football people decided they just don’t like him and they won’t let go of it. I have a feeling Mayfield is going to get that snub in the NFL Draft...people don’t like him just because, and they will never really look at his performance.

Russell Wilson as a comp because it struck me that Mayfield’s college performance the last season or two was so radically efficient that it made me think of Wilson’s final season in college at Wisconsin...one of the highest-quality college performances our systems have ever judged...and Mayfield is right there with him – both short QBs, both great college performances as seniors...just Wilson is a magician when it comes to scrambling and Mayfield is going to be a 4.9+ 40-time runner.

<u>QB-Score</u>	<u>QB</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>
8.242	Mayfield, Baker	2018	Oklahoma	73.0	220	70.6%	15.5	11.2	58.4
9.059	Dalton, Andy	2011	TCU	74.0	215	65.3%	13.6	13.4	42.9
10.306	Wilson, Russell	2012	Wisconsin	70.6	210	70.3%	13.4	10.4	38.9
8.340	Bridgewater, T.	2013	Louisville	74.0	215	66.5%	13.6	16.5	47.7
5.073	Robertson, John	2016	Villanova	72.5	221	66.0%	13.7	10.1	69.5
6.732	Callahan, Joe	2016	Wesley	73.1	216	69.8%	14.6	9.0	41.3
7.555	Fales, David	2014	San Jose St	73.1	220	67.1%	12.5	15.2	33.4

*“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.



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2018 NFL Draft Outlook:

Most early rankings I've seen have Mayfield between #25-50 overall for the draft. In order for him to move up as a top 10 prospect, the NFL media would have to do a 180 on him the next few months...and there will be no reason to. He's not going to physically impress at the Combine. What Mayfield does is efficient...so there will be no tape where people go 'wow' with his arm, stature, or foot speed. He's more likely to get the **Teddy Bridgewater**-like snub with too many comps between him and **Johnny Manziel** for off the field.

The media coverage will hurt Mayfield in this process, but I bet there will be a hard-nose, fake tough guy NFL head coach that is absolutely going to fall in love with Mayfield. He's **Rex Ryan's** wet dream at QB... or **Sean McDermott's**, or **Doug Marrone's**, etc. I could see a team 'shock' on draft day #1, moving into the #15-20 pick and grabbing Mayfield.

If I were an NFL GM, and I needed a QB now and I was going to have to take one of these top name ones – Mayfield is who I would take. If I had an established QB, a great team already, and I had no backup plan at QB (like the Steelers or Rams, as examples) – I get in and take Mayfield as my developmental guy...the possible best QB prospect who I buy at #25-30-40-50 in the draft.

NFL Outlook:

NFL tough guy coaches will dictate Mayfield's NFL career. He's likely going to a defense- and run-game-first team where all he has to do is throw efficiently 25–30 times a game...kinda like the **Case Keenum** story of 2017. However, what Mayfield can do in 25-30 throws can be better than other guys throwing 35+ times a game.

Mayfield is potentially going to be a 'winner', a better NFL QB than a fantasy or stat accumulation one. Only off-field trouble can stop him, but think about if Mayfield matures with age – then you have a highly talented QB with a giant chip who uses that chip to be great at his profession and not to fight people in local bars.

-- **R.C. Fischer** is an NFL Draft analyst for College Football Metrics.com and a football projections analyst for Fantasy Football Metrics.com. He's also a contributor for FantasyPros, and various other football websites annually.

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