



## NFL Draft 2018 Scouting Report: WR D.J. Moore, Maryland

*\*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.*

Going into the NFL Combine, I thought **D.J. Moore** might be the best WR prospect of the 2018 NFL Draft class. He had a very solid Combine, which cemented his top status in my (and many others) mind on Saturday post-Combine night.

I had previewed a game or two of his tape before the Combine, and liked what I saw, but now I set out to do a full-scale investigation of several game tapes and looking at his college production, etc. -- and now I am falling out of love with him. I like him...but 'love' is quickly falling off the table.

I see where Moore has the momentum of most every analytics, stat-based NFL Draft website to be their #2 WR prospect behind **Calvin Ridley**. For a few, he's the whisper #1...better than Ridley after Moore 'won' the measurables battle at the NFL Combine.

The reason Moore is 'winning' among some in the analytics crowd is based on something that's a bit of a flaw 'in the machine' for analytics people/systems. Many 'analytics' websites/people put a lot of weight on 'market share'. The raw totals don't matter as much, there's a lot of importance given to how much of the passing activity, whatever the level of activity was, went to a particular WR.

Simple, made up example... Let's say WR-A catches 3 passes for 50 yards and a TD. WR-B catches the same exact numbers 3-50-1. Which one is deemed 'better' in performance? For many analytics people, it's the WR whose QB (for made up example) completed 9 passes for 150 yards and just 1 TD...that's 33% 'market share' of all the completed passes and yards for the WR, and 100% of the TD share. The WR-B with the same 3-50-1 line in a game where his team completed 30 passes for 400 yards and 4 TDs...the market share percentages do not look as good.

I agree...market share is an insightful tool. We look at it too. We calculate it and have some weighting for it as well in our scouting models. However, there are two additional important things to take into consideration...



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1: What was the level of competition? Taking all the numbers for a season and calculating the percentages straight up is easy...but what if the good activity came from a disproportionate amount of games against 'loser' teams? I don't think performance against an FCS school and against Ohio State should be given equal billing/importance.

2: When the passing game is bad, and the QB production is low...1 more or less TD, a few catches, a big catch and run...it swings the percentages a lot. It's a double edge sword. Market share shows how important the WR was statistically, but it can also overrepresent what they did by percentage because one number/one activity into a small pie matters more. Does that makes sense? It's like being proud that my kid is a 4.0 student in college...and then you find out he's only taken two classes. The numbers are a lot more prone to wild swings because of the small sample size problem.

**D.J. Moore** caught 8 TD passes in 2017...his team accounted for 15 TD passes all season...53% of his team's TD passes is awesome market share, historically. But just one TD less would be statistically under 50% and looks a little less awesome historically when you're looking at JUST percentages. Two of **D.J. Moore's** 8 TDs this season came against 'Towson'...a game that only had 2 TDs passes for Maryland. 100% TD market share for Moore, which is awesome...and happened against a Division II team.

It's a trap door I've fallen down a few times over the years...and I don't want to fall down it again with **D.J. Moore** by overvaluing him based on a smaller sample and bigger market share.

The reason I'm leery of the market share I see with Moore – the numbers against better teams are good-not-great, but then when I watch the tape – he's getting gobbled up by the Ohio State, Michigan State, and Michigan DBs. He's not getting open/separation – whether the ball is thrown his way or not. After watching technician WRs like **Calvin Ridley** and **Christian Kirk** along with Moore...I see Moore is a bigger, better athlete overall, but he's not a better pure WR craftsman. Ridley and Kirk run rings around Moore for route running and hands – and it's not that Moore is bad...just not the technician the other top guys are.

With Moore, the more I watch, the more I worry that you're betting on his physical size/strength and athleticism overcoming WR deficiencies...that you'd teach him the WR position and then have an ace WR prospect on your hands – and it's very possible for him to achieve that because he has the raw tools and is a hard worker. What he's not is 'ready-to-go', ready-to-star out of the gates in the NFL. Something is lacking and you're betting he can obtain with a snap of a finger – if he does, you win. If he doesn't, then he's like a million other promising WR bodies that were the best WR on a crappy college team who then got lost on a pro team as a J.A.G./'just another guy'.

I pre-loved Moore going into my deeper studies, and when I started by watching the 2017 Ohio State game (2-11-0) for Moore...I felt like I saw a ghost. I was ready to blame the low output on the QB play (and the QBs threw 3-for-13 for 16 yards, not kidding) before I started watching the tape. Then I



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watched Moore constantly blanketed by OSU's DBs on every route. Same thing against Michigan State. Same thing against Michigan. Same thing against Penn State.

Granted...the Maryland QB play was ridiculously bad – four QBs played in 2017. All of them were varying degrees of awful. We don't know if Moore would be a bit better with real QB play, but just judging the way they tried to get him the ball...Moore was not a great WR getting open, he was 'good'/OK.

Where Moore gets exciting is after the catch...and that's where you have to take him more seriously. Once the ball is in their hands...you want it in **D.J. Moore's** hands more than Ridley-Kirk's. Moore is like a well-built RB after the catch – fast and sturdy. In the NFL, if Moore just got 3-4-5 passes a game in bubbles and simple crossers...he'd be great. But Moore is not the 'go to' WR in a 'must get open' situation...not that I see, not yet.

Moore is a notoriously hard worker and good locker room guy. He has B+/A- physical tools. He has a foundation where he could develop into a really good WR, but he's not there day one. What I see, what the computer sees is more of a 'B' prospect than an 'A' one. Nothing wrong with that...but there is some logic as to why the NFL draft committee told him he should not enter the draft early.

Moore needs more seasoning, and the NFL 'seasoning' may turn him into a very good player in 2-3 years. He's a good prospect but hard to say he's a great or 'for sure' one right now.

### D.J. Moore, Through the Lens of Our WR Scouting Algorithm:

The QB play for Maryland is so bad it's hard to read a ton into Moore's output numbers but note 4 of his 8 TDs in 2017 came against Towson and Northwestern. His 2017 season was like two sweet games and then a lot of OK/good/weak.

His 2016 season...same thing – two good games and then a bunch of 'meh'. I mean, I know the QB play is bad but how tough is it to get your best player a bubble screen, etc.? That's more on the coaches than Moore, but still it's odd that Moore did not see the ball more.

His last two seasons against Ohio State...3 catches for 14 yards, total. OSU is littered with top NFL DB players/prospects. Moore was stuck against them.

Moore did punt returns in 2017, kick returns in 2016...and he was 'meh'. OK. Nothing special.

I'm attacking Moore because I want to prove or disprove him as a prospect and everything I see, besides his physique, is not making me like him as a top WR/top 50 draft pick level. AND I really thought he would be/I would like him like that.

Every so often I see a little flash of **Brandin Cooks**, but Moore is not that good or fast, as Cooks.



NFL Combine measurables...

6'0"/210, 9.0" hands, 31.6" arms

4.42 40-time, 6.95 three-cone, 4.07 shuttle

15 bench reps, 11'0" broad, 39.5" vertical

These are legit NFL WR measurables. He's a legit NFL WR prospect. I am just wanting to see something special on tape and in numbers and I'm not getting it. Whether it's Moore, or just his offense holding him back makes for a tough debate.

**The Historical WR Prospects to Whom D.J. Moore Most Compares Within Our System:**

I've heard a few people compare Moore to **Pierre Garcon**...I could see that, maybe. Garcon sure felt a whole lot more 'wow' than what I see from Moore. **Donald Jones** was a very promising WR prospect until he had a serious injury and faded away as quickly as he started lighting up.

You draft/like Moore because the Garcon measurables, etc., are kind of lurking. I just don't know if Moore has it in him. Garcon's WR profile was a rare bird 10 years ago...not so much in 2018.

<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 Strngt h Metric</u>	<u>Speed Agility Metri c</u>	<u>Hands ' Metric</u>
8.300	2018	Moore	D.J.	Maryland	6	0.0	210	9.07	4.20	7.78
8.342	2010	Jones	Donald	Youngstown St	6	0.3	214	14.55	8.55	8.71
11.579	2008	Garcon	Pierre	Mt Union	5	11.9	210	12.92	9.98	10.11
8.630	2010	Cruz	Victor	Massachusetts	5	11.5	206	12.10	7.61	9.75
6.979	2010	Price	Taylor	Ohio	6	0.4	204	10.29	11.32	7.85
5.344	2012	Thompson	Deonte	Florida	5	11.1	200	8.03	4.22	1.80
5.241	2009	Edison	Dominique	SF Austin	6	2.1	204	8.01	8.08	7.29

*\*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.*



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*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.*

### **2018 NFL Draft Outlook:**

Everyone is pushing Moore into their top 50 overall for the draft, and maybe he belongs there but I don't think he's as obvious that he's the clear #1-2 WR in this draft. He's probably gotten enough hype to have an NFL team take him top 50 and I can't blame them. I'm just starting to have some serious doubts...where before I thought he might be THE best WR in this draft. Now, I'm not sure he's top 5/obvious.

If I were an NFL GM, I don't think I'd pull the trigger on Moore in the top 50 or 100. Too many experienced veteran WRs available in free agency and too many other decent prospects in this draft. I like Moore and I can see the upside, but honestly -- I was more impressed with **Keelan Cole** (UDFA/Jacksonville) scouting in 2017 than Moore here in 2018.

### **NFL Outlook:**

I could see it taking 2-3 seasons before Moore starts having an impact. He's a guy who saw a lot of bad passes, bombs, and bubbles with Maryland. He wasn't running meticulous routes with a QB who could deliver. We don't know just how good of a WR he is. He may be all big frame, tough and speedy but lacking big time NFL hands and natural WR route running and cuts.

I see the upside potential, but I see things that make me wonder if he's just a nice, useful 'C' grade WR no one will care about in 12-18 months.



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