NFL Draft 2018 Scouting Report: OLB Genard Avery, Memphis

*Our LB 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.

I thought for sure **Genard Avery** was a great sleeper for 2018…but after further review, I'm left disappointed.

What's not to love? I liked a preview of his tape pre-Combine. 22.0 TFLs and 80 tackles last season. Ran a 4.59 40-time with a terrific 6.90 three-cone. All the dots should connect here, right? But they didn't.

There are three pieces of the puzzle that came together and drove Avery from a possible 'great' prospect to a 'good/OK' prospect…

1) Avery looks like a middle linebacker. He's listed as an OLB prospect, typically, but he's short (6'0") and thick (248)…he just looks like a plugger up the middle. However, he moves swiftly like an outside linebacker. He mostly played up the middle in 2017 but on various plays drifted over to become an edge rusher.

Avery looks and plays more like an interior LB, but his athleticism shouts 'OLB'. He doesn't look totally comfortable as an OLB though. His body movements seem more in line with an interior guy.

2) He's not that great on the interior. I really thought his build and movements skills would make him a great ILB prospect…maybe the best in the draft. But he doesn't look all that comfortable as an ILB. He's not a seek & destroy linebacker. He's more of a sit back on heels and not involved in as much action as you'd think/I'd thought…but then he surprises by splitting out to the edge and bum rushing the backfield with NFL speed and he made some plays.

Avery is too small to be an edge rusher…and he's not that great at it anyway. So, he's not an asset off the edge but he isn't a dominant interior linebacker either. He's a very good athlete, but not the greatest football player I've studied.

3) The output/numbers on tackles, etc., foretell some of the issues stated in points #1 and #2 above, and we'll get to that in the next section.

Avery is a solid enough prospect – athletically built for the NFL. However, I saw too much standing around and in the wrong place at the wrong time and blocked out of plays on tape. I remember thinking he'd show out in his two games against Central Florida, but he never really 'happened'; he had no major impact. I expected to see a speedy, future-ILB starting monster on tape and the more I watched, the more I saw a guy with nice physical tools that put me to sleep with his dull play. I

watched/studied **Roquan Smith** tape before I watched Avery…the two aren't even close in movement skills. Smith isn't the greatest LB in instincts I've seen either, but he flashed many more dominant moments than Avery.

Avery appears to be a solid guy off the field. Solid academically and a team captain. I've heard scouts say he's a nice special teamer and I dismissed that because I thought Avery was better than that, but now after deeper study, I'm more aligned with the masses on him.

Genard Avery, Through the Lens of Our OLB Scouting Algorithm:

13 games played in 2017…had 5 or more solo tackles in a game just 4 times. Had three or fewer solos 6 times…a lot of games in general with low solo tackle counts or low total tackle counts for an athlete like Avery planted in the middle of the defense. Avery was not getting to ballcarriers well on tape and the numbers also say he was underwhelming in getting to them.

22.0 TFLs last season, but 5.5 came against Tulane…over half the total TFLs for 2017 came in a 3-4 game stretch against marginal American Conference foes. What I saw was a lot of his TFLs and sacks coming as a surprise rusher off the edge…especially the right side of the offensive line. He's going to be faster than many AAC conference right tackles, so he'll pad some stats…I don't think the heavy TFL totals are any sign of a great backfield disruptor for the pros.

2018 NFL Combine measurables…

6'0.4"/248 pounds, 31" arms, 10.2" hands

4.59 40-time, 1.59 three-cone, 4.36 shuttle, 6.90 three-cone

26 bench press, 36.0" vertical, 10'4" broad jump

The Historical OLB Prospects to Whom Genard Avery Most Compares Within Our System:

The **Miles Burris** comparison takes me back…we liked him. Athletic producer from a mid-major conference…like Avery. He got NFL looks as an ILB and OLB in the NFL but never capitalized and then got hurt and disappeared. I fear that's where Avery is headed…solid hand/forgotten.

OLB Grade	Last	First	Draft Yr	College	H	H	W	Tackle Strgth Metric	Spd Agil Metric	Pass Rush Metric
7.577	Avery	Genard	2018	Memphis	6	0.4	248	8.49	10.02	7.45
9.129	Burris	Miles	2012	SD State	6	1.5	246	7.33	9.31	7.91
4.454	Gibson	Thaddeus	2010	Ohio State	6	2.0	243	5.21	8.35	7.13
3.299	Parish	C.J.	2012	Arizona	6	0.8	242	5.44	7.64	7.85
2.967	Carter	Chris	2011	Fresno St	6	1.1	248	5.59	10.76	9.45
5.152	Green	Jeremiah	2013	Nevada	6	1.1	245	6.75	10.27	10.66
11.488	Bowman	Navorro	2010	Penn State	6	0.4	242	9.70	8.97	7.36
1.909	Stupar	Nathan	2012	Penn State	6	1.4	241	5.89	7.05	7.07

*A score of **8.00**+ is where we see a stronger correlation of LBs 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 NFL elite LB.*

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

Tackle-Strength Metrics = A combination of several physical and performance measurements. An attempt to classify the LB prospect's ability to stop the run, as well as a gauge of how physical the player is and the likelihood of higher tackle counts in the NFL. All based on profiles of LBs historically.

Speed-Agility Metrics = A combination of several speed, agility, and size measurements...as well as game performance data to profile a LB for speed/agility based on LBs historically. A unique measuring system to look for LBs that profile for quickness, pass-coverage ability, and general ability to cover more ground.

Pass Rush Metrics = A combination of the physical measurements, but also proven on-field ability to get to the QB/backfield in college.

2018 NFL Draft Outlook:

Avery has been trending a 5th to 7th round prospect, and I was dismissive of that before…now, I'm on board.

If I were an NFL GM, I'd have an eye on Avery. He has NFL movement skills that could be coached up into a more impactful player. There is hope here. I just wouldn't pay top 150 draft pick money for it.

NFL Outlook:

Definitely makes a roster and hangs in the NFL for a while. He's likely a backup and special teamer for years, but maybe hones his craft and becomes a solid starter at 3-4 ILB or 4-3 OLB. I wouldn't write him off, but his prospectus doesn't leave me that excited at this stage.

Copyright Statement

*Signature*_____ *Date*_____
3/27/2018