



NFL Draft 2018 Scouting Report: RB Kerryon Johnson, Auburn

**Our RB 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.*

**We use the term "Power RB" to separate physically bigger, more between-the-tackles-capable RBs from our "speed RBs" group. "Speed RBs" are physically smaller, but much faster/quicker, and less likely to flourish between the tackles.*

Two inflammatory statements to start this scouting report...

1) I'm surprised I'm even writing this extended report. When I saw the measurables, the flimsy output at Auburn (relatively speaking), and watched some of his tape pre- and post-Combine...I was sure Johnson would fall to the 5th-7th- round or go undrafted. Our computer scouting models told me not to waste time looking any deeper, and my eyes told me the same.

...and then the Lions draft him in the early 2nd round (#43).

Are you kidding me? Now, I have to go back and see if I was missing something.

2) So, I conducted a deeper study this past few days and ran through more game tape trying to find clues of where I was wrong...

My quick conclusion – I'm hard-pressed to find a worse RB prospect that I've ever scouted who was drafted in the first two rounds of an NFL Draft.

I absolutely set out to prove my original thesis on Kerryon wrong. And then, come to find out, it was even worse than I suspected.

It's a three-pronged scouting disaster. (1) Awful measurables. (2) Awful tape. (3) Misleading, juiced college output for one+ seasons.

1) Awful Measurables...

I mean, come on. These measurables warrant an undrafted free agent status if I've ever seen one.

5'11"/213 is not a great place for an RB prospect unless they have something unique to bring to the table, like incredible speed, or surprising power, or amazing hands.



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Kerryon does not have 'speed' in his favor – an average/OK 4.52 40-time...at a Pro Day, so it might be more 4.60 speed. A 1.63 10-yard burst is terrible, and boy does it show on tape. A 4.29 shuttle and 7.07 three-cone at the NFL Combine was pretty weak...and boy does it show on tape. We'll get to that tape in a moment.

Power? 11 reps on the bench press...really? Did Johnson not understand this would be a major thing at the Combine for an RB...or for his viability? He wasn't even smart enough to 'skip it' to hide it...just claim a nagging shoulder or whatever.

Great hands? Hardly...how about borderline 'bad hands'? The double-catch-struggle-with-every-other-catch master is a long nickname, but appropriate.

Kerryon Johnson has the measurables of a 150+ overall prospect, at best. However, some RBs can be so gifted with vision and shiftiness, the measurables are overcome. So, what does the tape show?

2) Awful Tape...

One of the worst 'top' RB prospect tapes I've ever watched.

How's that answer?

All I can see in my mind, when I think of Kerryon Johnson, is him constantly trying to run and leap over defenders (for no great reason every time) and getting absolutely obliterated time after time. First, his constant leaping/jumping shows me a running theme – Kerryon is into avoiding contact. He doesn't put his head down/shoulder in and just take what he can to finish off runs, nor does he fly by them with speed (because he doesn't have it). He tries to jump over them too much...a bad, bad, bad sign for an NFL RB.

Kerryon Johnson played in a very pro-run game spread offense with a great run game designer in **Gus Malzahn** (Auburn HC) and good+ blocking. Johnson is a 'good' athlete for college, so he could stop and start at the line of scrimmage and then punch through for some yards...but not so much against Alabama, Central Florida, etc. Johnson is so slow that when he tries to hesitate into traffic and change direction or wait for blocking to open something up...he gets consumed quickly because he doesn't have the burst or hop to elude would-be tacklers.

I saw not a stitch of running back ability that I'd want to work with in the NFL, but here are the Lions signing up for it...the ones who thought Ameer Abdullah was a great workhorse back.

Kerryon is a terrible runner, and not smooth in the receiving game. Often double-clutches/bobbles his short-pass catches.

Watching Johnson against top opponents in 2017...just bland/mediocre at best and terrible too many times if you really watch what he's doing.



3) Misleading Output...

We'll get into this in the next section.

I really believe **Kerryon Johnson** is going to get blown out of the NFL fast. I don't think he's a serious football player...he's very passive in personality, a nice kid...but very laid back – and obviously not a workout warrior with his NFL Combine numbers. He's smart. He's fun-loving. He doesn't feel like a legit main carry, pure 'force' of an RB AT ALL.

Kerryon Johnson, Through the Lens of Our RB Scouting Algorithm:

I looked at Johnson's output against his top opponents in 2016 and 2017, and I found the same guy. Bigger totals, that catch (deceive) the eye nicely, off of bigger carry counts. I'd expect any decent college RB to run for 100+ yards in a game if they get 30+ carries in a game with the Auburn offense.

If I took the five toughest games Johnson had in 2016 (Clemson, LSU, Ga., Alabama, Oklahoma) and his five toughest games in 2017 (C. Florida, Alabama, LSU and Georgia 2x), I would get the following averages per game...

21.2 carries

90.0 rushing yards

0.4 TDs

4.2 yards per carry (flimsy)

In 3 of those 10 games, Johnson ran for 100+ yards...on carries of 30-31-32 in them.

Everything I see points to Johnson as an average SEC RB pushed to decent numbers by playing in a pro-run game offense (like we would blast a Texas Tech QB or WR for racking numbers in a favorable 'system')...a guy with below average measurables on top of the mediocre performances – a looming disaster for the NFL.



2018 NFL Combine and Pro Day Measurables...

5'11"/213, 9.75" hands, 32.5" arms

4.52 40-time, 1.63 10-yard (Pro Day)

4.29 shuttle, 7.07 three-cone

11 bench reps, 40.0 vertical (the one great measurable), 10'6" broad jump

The Historical RB Prospects to Whom Kerryon Johnson Most Compares Within Our System:

Johnson compares with some really good WAC/Mountain West Conference RBs...guys who are average NFL talents, but crush it in the WAC/MWC and everyone gets all excited and then they're barely in the league 2-3 years later. That's my image of Johnson – good in college and going to flameout in the pros.

RB Score	RB-Re	RB-ru	Last	First	College	Yr	H	H	W	Speed Metric	Agility Metric	Power Metric
5.906	3.35	4.78	Johnson	Kerryon	Auburn	2018	5	11.4	213	1.62	4.32	4.20
6.810	3.43	5.67	Jefferson	Stefphon	Nevada	2013	5	10.5	213	-0.14	4.80	6.41
-0.930	0.11	-1.88	Harvey	Brynn	C. Florida	2013	5	10.6	212	-5.74	-1.95	4.40
0.828	-1.95	-0.06	Davis	Enrique	Ole Miss	2012	5	11.1	220	-7.36	-3.58	4.14
7.303	4.31	7.07	Hill	Brian	Wyoming	2017	6	1.0	219	4.81	5.66	5.81

**A score of 8.50+ is where we see a stronger correlation of RBs 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 RB.*

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

Overall rating/score = A combination of several on-field performance measures, including refinement for strength of opponents faced, mixed with all the physical measurement metrics—then compared/rated historically within our database and formulas. More of a traditional three-down search—runner, blocker, and receiver.

**RB-Re score = New/testing starting in 2015. Our new formula/rating that attempts to identify and quantify a prospect's receiving skills even deeper than in our original formulas. RB prospects can now*



make it/thrive in the NFL strictly based on their receiving skills—it is an individual attribute sought out for the NFL and no longer dismissed or overlooked. Our rating combines a study of their receiving numbers in college in relation to their offense and opponents, as well as profiling size-speed-agility along with hand-size measurables, etc.

**RB-Ru score = New/testing starting in 2015. Our new formula/rating that attempts to classify and quantify an RB prospect's ability strictly as a runner of the ball. Our rating combines a study of their rushing numbers in college in relation to their offense and strength of opponents, as well as profiling size-speed-agility along with various size measurables, etc.*

Raw Speed Metric = A combination of several speed and size measurements from the NFL Combine, judged along with physical size profile, and then compared/rated historically within our database and scouting formulas. This is a rating strictly for RBs of a similar/bigger size profile.

Agility Metric = A combination of several speed and agility measurements from the NFL Combine, judged along with physical size profile, and then compared/rated historically within our database and scouting formulas. This is a rating strictly for RBs of a similar/bigger size profile.

2018 NFL Draft Outlook:

As I've said, I would have bet Kerryon falling to the 5th+ round of this draft. As I write this, the draft has occurred, and Johnson went #43 to Detroit...and I am absolutely dumbfounded.

NFL Outlook:

There have been other top RBs that analysts loved but I pooh-poohed, but usually we're not miles apart...I just think they get overvalued because of the school they went to, the hype, etc., like **Melvin Gordon** or even **Alvin Kamara** – I think they are OK talents but not great, and they have had nice production in the NFL. I think Johnson is going to be different, he's that kind of bad – he's not going to put up numbers and he'll be flushed from the NFL within a few years from what I see.

