



## NFL Draft 2019 Scouting Report: RB Darrell Henderson, Memphis

*\*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.*

Is the problem with **Darrell Henderson** that he just doesn't 'look' like a 'star' NFL running back? *Whatever that means*, and we'll discuss it in a moment. Is it the fact that he went to Memphis...and no one, nationally, cares about them? It's certainly not as prestigious as 'Alabama'. It isn't even 'Penn State', which may explain why analysts lost their minds for 4.49 40-time **Miles Sanders** and yawned at the 4.49 40-time of **Darrell Henderson**?

Is it the size (5'8")? Is it 'Memphis'...is it the 'American Athletic Conference'? Why is it so easy to ignore Henderson as a top RB prospect...as a contender for the #1 RB prospect in the draft class?

Henderson is getting respect from the football analysts and fans, but not full love and 'buzz'. Why not?

And I'm not just pointing fingers - I am asking myself this question of myself...why didn't I get more excited?

Why am I asking myself this question?

Because after running the numbers and watching the tape...I'm not so sure Henderson isn't THE best RB prospect in the 2019 draft.

My reaction to watching some preview tape of Henderson pre-Combine was like most everyone's...he looked good/fine on tape, had sweet college numbers, but I assumed he was probably pushed by his team/style of offense/weak conference - but in the end, I think it was that he just didn't LOOK like what my mind wants in an RB prospect. I want big bruisers, big muscular frame...6'0"+, 220+ pounds, and/or I want speed demons...guys who run in the 4.3s. I want the video creation running back...and **Darrell Henderson** is not what I would design in my video game - I wouldn't be creating a running back in *the lab* and go... "Height? 5'8, for sure." Weight? Definitely under 210. And definitely give them that Devonta Freeman look that I love (btw- I hate that look on RB prospects)!"

My eyes didn't see what Henderson was doing/accomplishing in a short preview pre-Combine. My mind saw what it wanted to see (or looked past what it didn't want to see)...my biases filled in the blanks. So, I did the 'nice' thing, because I could tell he had some talent - a month+ ago, I said he was 'good',



MARCH 27, 2019

'scrappy'...I might have said 'sleeper'. I liked him OK, dismissively...but I never thought I would be having the conversation I am now – I'm now wondering if he is the best RB prospect in 2019. The more I study him, the more I'm wondering how I missed this upfront. He's not just good in a bad year for RB prospects...he's really talented. A lot more talented than I understood in early previews of him pre-Combine.

If you really want to get to know **Darrell Henderson**, just watch all four of his games the past two years against Central Florida. UCF is by far the best team Henderson has faced...and Memphis played them once in the regular season 2017 and in 2018, then again in the AAC title game each of those years – and those games were wars. Memphis should have won both title games, but UCF was great/miraculous in those games to match Memphis.

By 2018, UCF had to know all about Henderson, and yet...well, look at the progression:

6-48-0 rushing, 1-25-0 receiving = Henderson v. UCF **regular season 2017** (40-13 loss to undefeated UCF)

15-109-1 rushing, 3-14-0 receiving = Henderson v. UCF in **AAC title game 2017** (62-55 loss in double OT)

31-199-1 rushing, 2-13-0 receiving = Henderson v. UCF **regular season 2018** (31-30 loss, blowing a 30-14 lead)

16-210-3 rushing, 2-9-0 receiving, 1 TD pass = Henderson v. UCF in **AAC title game 2018** (56-41 loss...Memphis was leading 31-14 at one point, and 41-35 going into the 4th quarter)

In the 2017-2018 span, UCF went 25-1 overall as a team. One of the best teams in college football...and they should've lost to Memphis 1-to-3 times in that span.

Henderson ran for 100+ yards on UCF his last three games facing them, and 199 or more yards his last two games against them.

Henderson's three game average vs. powerful UCF, since become the starter: 20.7 carries, 172.7 rushing yards, 184.7 scrimmage yards, and 1.7 TDs per game...and a passing TD.

When I watched these games in order, from oldest to latest, I marveled at the running back Henderson had become...or revealed to me...

-- He is as explosive a running back as you'll find in this draft. 'Explosive' gets thrown around cheap/loose during draft seasons and scouting reports, but with Henderson it's real. I see some info that his 20-yard time was sub 2.50 at the Combine and his 10-yard was sub 1.50 – that's fast in a hurry and maybe faster in 10 and 20 yards than anyone at any position in the draft.

You see it on tape...Henderson just pulls away from defenders. He finds holes and he's usually through them before defenders can react properly.



MARCH 27, 2019

-- He's just not 'fast', he smartly finds his holes and then punches the jets – fast burst and fearless. He runs with reckless abandon.

-- He's tough. He takes hits and keeps his balance and rolls on. He'll lower his shoulder into you when all else fails. He's a between the tackles runner at the next level.

-- He's didn't run the agility drills at the NFL Combine, but he looks fine there too. He moves east-west fine. I'd estimate a 6.90-7.10 three cone.

-- You can see his fluid sideways movements in how graceful he is catching flares and screens out of the backfield. Capable, though small (8.6") hands -- but Henderson is just smooth getting into position and then just hits that accelerator and is gone before defenders can close in on him.

Henderson has a gift...he has many gifts. In some ways, he's a near perfect sub-210 pound RB prospect. High-end, breakaway speed with a solid frame (not a lanky track & field body), good-to-great instincts and vision in traffic, tough runner/not easy to bring down, solid+ in the passing game.

I didn't really 'get it' until I walked through his career with more detail/study. His performance numbers pop as does his tape, and he's a quality person off the field – nice, humble in interviews and has been on some academic honor rolls on and off. There's nothing to hate (except my pre-bias of him not fitting my preferred 'look') and everything to love here.

### Darrell Henderson, Through the Lens of Our RB Scouting Algorithm:

Some of Henderson's output numbers are silly...ridiculous...almost too good to be true.

-- The last two seasons, 130 carries and 214 carries – both campaigns with 8.9 yards per carry. A career 8.2 yards per carry is stunning.

He was #1 in all the NCAA in yards per carry in 2017, 2018...and has the best career ypc in the NCAA tracking since 2013.

-- In his last 14 games with 10 or more carries, Henderson has run for 100+ yards every time.

-- 22 rushing TDs in 2018. 28 rushing TDs in his last 19 games...33 total TDs his last 19 games.

-- Returned two kicks as a freshman, his first for 14 yards his second for a 99-yard TD.



2019 NFL Combine Measurables...

5'8.3"/208, 31" arms, 8.6" hands

4.49 40-time, DNP agility, 20-yard 2.48 (?), 10-yard 1.48(?) – more numbers too good to be true from Henderson

22 bench reps, 33.5" vertical, 10'1" broad

The Historical RB Prospects to Whom Darrell Henderson Most Compares Within Our System:

---

Of course, the most infamous Memphis RB of all-time, **DeAngelo Williams** is a comp. I should have thought of that before I reached this point in the report. I like the **Maurice Jones-Drew** comp as well...smaller, but faster-tougher runners. Only, note, Henderson is tracking as a faster NFL runner than all these names.

Also, note – I still cannot believe **Bishop Sankey** flamed out in the NFL. Such promise as a rookie...

RB Score	RB-Re	RB-ru	Last	First	College	Yr.	H	H	W	Speed Metric	Agility Metric	Power Metric
8.816	7.46	9.02	Henderson	Darrell	Memphis	2019	5	8.3	208	10.78	8.90	9.57
12.97	8.81	11.29	Williams	DeAngelo	Memphis	2006	5	9.0	214	9.04	15.38	11.52
6.981	5.53	5.04	Miller	Lamar	Miami, Fla	2012	5	10.7	212	8.88	8.62	5.92
8.952	7.04	7.14	Sankey	Bishop	Washingtn	2014	5	9.4	209	5.69	12.89	11.47
8.834	4.36	7.56	Jones-Drew	Maurice	UCLA	2006	5	6.6	207	7.28	-1.18	6.85
7.217	7.25	7.14	Cunninghm	Benny	Mid Tnn St	2013	5	9.6	209	5.01	8.13	12.07
8.001	7.42	6.09	Murray	Demarco	Oklahoma	2011	5	11.5	213	7.09	-2.07	8.85
6.860	7.55	4.88	Williams	Jonathan	E. Carolina	2011	5	11.4	212	7.44	3.89	6.44

\*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.



MARCH 27, 2019

*Overall rating/score = A combination of several on-field performance measures, including refinement for the 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 = 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 = 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.*

### **2019 NFL Draft Outlook:**

Mostly, I see respect for Henderson in the current draft rankings. Not fawning, but like top 5 among RBs and within the top 100 overall. I think he's a 3rd-round pick for sure, a possible semi-shock late-2nd-rounder.

***If I were an NFL GM***, I'd want in on Henderson for sure, but I don't pay up for running backs unless they are super special. **David Johnson** is more my ideal, not Henderson...but if Henderson fell to the 4th-round, I'd be getting an itchy trigger finger. I see some data within our system that sees some elite here.

### **NFL Outlook:**

Eventually, he'll be a very productive NFL running back...if not one of the top producers. Whether he starts as a rookie and rolls from there, or it takes a year or so for him to bump past the current starter. Henderson is bound to work in the NFL – a three-down back.

