



NFL Draft 2019 Scouting Report: RB Darwin Thompson, Utah State

**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.*

-- 'Quick hit' scouting is a quick publishing of shorthand notes I had from watching 2-4 games of activity on a prospect this week, and with me already knowing the measurables and where the prospect was drafted. Also, with me having done some brief tape study/work on them and having a computer scouting model grade on them pre-Draft. With the 'quick hit', I wanted to do an abridged re-look at certain prospects, post-draft, for any numbers of reasons. --

Why a re-look here? I had no plans on doing a cross-check here, but all of a sudden **Darwin Thompson** is the deep sleeper RB of the month in dynasty rookie drafts – his ADP is climbing. Someone with a following must have released a report extolling his virtues and the masses are following it. I did see some PFF article titles that led me to believe they loved him, so that's probably the culprit.

I could save you whatever the PFF annual fee is, if you want? Here goes my report on every RB drafted every year: Everyone is great and/or a sleeper -- and here are some numbers/stats/acronyms that look 'studious' and you won't question them, you'll just accept, that proves 'sleeper'.

I'm not against the pursuit of advanced analytics and silver-bullet formulas, but how is it EVERYONE is a sleeper to love? Any whooo...

Thompson is on fire of late and I wanted to take a second look because I'm getting more questions on him the past few days than any other player.

My computer models graded him as mediocre pre-Draft. I didn't love the KC landing spot. I watched some of his tape when I saw his decent Pro Day numbers, and I was not really swayed by what I saw. He's a fringe NFL talent in my book...but, maybe, I missed it? So, let's take a second look.

Here are my notes as I gathered them...

-- A couple of years at NE Oklahoma State before his one season at Utah State.

-- A JUCO All-American.



-- Started watching him against his toughest opponent, Michigan State...but I'm going to cut it short because he looks bad, but it could be just his first work at the D1 level and it's against a top CFB program. I'll give him a pass.

-- He's so small...short, small hands, short arms. He just has the 'small vibe'. No way he'll be a lead RB in a backfield at that size (unless he has stunning speed, and he doesn't).

-- No real burst or pop when he takes the handoff. Very cautious and slow to get going.

-- Hesitates into contact.

-- I was thinking, 2018 rookie **Boston Scott** is 2x-3x the athlete **Darwin Thompson** is...both smaller-sized, mid-major RB prospects taken late in the draft. Scott didn't get anywhere near this attention Thompson is getting, and Scott was/is a way better prospect.

-- Darwin has good hands. He can catch, but he's such a diminutive target. He can work in the screen game, etc. A slower, less impressive **Darren Sproles**...more in the **Theo Riddick** camp than Sproles as a receiving and after-the-catch threat.

-- Physically tough-enough runner. Not a bruiser and slows into traffic too much, but when he does take on shoulder/non-wrap up hits he keeps his balance fairly well. He is tackled, wrapped-up tackled, too easily...in part because he's not moving very fast, he slows down too much near congestion – a 4.55 Pro Day 40-time is more a 4.6+ runner.

-- Tries to hurdle tackles a lot, which is fine...but scouts seem to love when this happens. I don't. There's only so many times a hurdle might work.

-- Looked overmatched against Michigan State and BYU.

-- His BYU game, a 17-109-0 rushing effort...was basically two sprung runs and a lot boring otherwise.

-- 'Boring' is a key word here. One of the dullest highlight reels you'll watch on a drafted RB. He had a big play against Tennessee Tech, an FCS school, that is usually the lead play they show you on a highlight – and this somehow proves how awesome he is. It's Tennessee Tech!?

Darwin Thompson, Through the Lens of Our RB Scouting Algorithm:

-- Two 100+ yard games against two run defenses ranked #109 or worse of 130 schools in 2018 (San Jose State and Hawaii). Another 100+ came against an FCS school (Tenn Tech). And then a solid 100+ against a good BYU defense. Thompson just was not all that impressive at a mid-major school/schedule.



-- Against stronger teams like Air Force, Michigan State, BYU, Boise State and North Texas (bowl) he averaged: 13.0 carries for 65.0 yards and 0.8 TDs per game. Not bad, but nothing dominant...just a penchant for being the TD runner.

-- Caught 0-2 passes in a game in 10 of 13 games.

-- *Measurables (Pro Day):*

5'8"/198, 8.38" hands (small), 29.75" arms

4.55 40-time, 2.63 20-yard, 1.58 10-yard

4.30 shuttle, 6.93 three-cone

23 bench reps, 39.0" vertical, 10'6" broad jump

The Historical RB Prospects to Whom Darwin Thompson Most Compares Within Our System:

You can tell what our computer scouting models thinks of Thompson...not good.

<u>RB Score</u>	<u>RB-Re</u>	<u>RB-ru</u>	<u>Last</u>	<u>First</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>Yr</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>Speed Metric</u>	<u>Agility Metric</u>	<u>Power Metric</u>
5.909	6.20	4.90	Thompson	Darwin	Utah St	2019	5	8.0	198	-0.03	3.76	7.57
4.150	2.07	2.28	Hayes	Brandon	Memphis	2015	5	8.4	198	-2.94	3.11	7.54
4.304	2.05	2.93	Webb	Ralph	Vandy	2018	5	9.2	202	-1.08	0.31	9.87
5.845	5.65	4.15	Calhoun	Brian	Wisconsin	2006	5	9.2	201	-1.41	1.79	6.72
1.251	3.75	-0.14	Jones	Perry	Virginia	2013	5	7.3	192	-4.87	-3.09	3.87

**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 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:

Drafted #214 overall by Kansas City

NFL Outlook:

He might get into a passing catching role in the NFL because he has good hands and is a built/stout to tackle in the open field against DBs, but I have a feeling we won't remember him in a few years. It's possible KC UDFA RB's **James Williams** and/or **Marcus Marshall** are more talented sleeper RB prospects than Thompson.

