# NFL Draft 2020 Scouting Reports: RB J.K. Dobbins, Ohio 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.*

I've done a deeper study/scouting on most of the top RB prospects for the 2020 NFL Draft…and I think we're down to four contenders for 'best' RB prospect in the class. They are…

-- **Jonathan Taylor**…the freak of nature in size and athleticism and off the charts production.

-- **A.J. Dillon**…the freak of athletic nature for a 240+ pound man.

-- ____...some heretofore unknown RB who was not invited to the NFL Combine, but comes out of nowhere; someone I might stumble across while panning for gold in April. This ____ may not exist, but that won't stop me from looking for him anyway.

-- **J.K. Dobbins**…he's the **D'Andre Swift** people are looking for.

Really, at this stage, we're debating Taylor v. Dillon v. Dobbins as 'top guys'…debating which one is the best.

Each can be their own 'top guy' among RB prospects if you classify them further…

Taylor is the best traditional do-it-all big back who is as good a technician and athlete combo running between the tackles as you will find – **Todd Gurley** (pre-knee), old peak **Arian Foster**, etc.

Dillon is the best pure hammer between the guards and tackles. If you want someone who can ram the opposing defense into submission but can also run as fast/faster than most front seven defenders a la what **Derrick Henry** or the one year with the Patriots **LeGarrette Blount** could do – then Dillon's your guy. Many coaches crave tough guy runners like Dillon.

If you want a more well-rounded back in the **Christian McCaffrey** or **Dalvin Cook** type of mold…you'll want Dobbins. Of these 3, he's the least impressive between the tackles, but he makes up for it with speed, improv, change of direction, and pass catching ability compared to Taylor-Dillon.

Dobbins is kind of a lesser version of McCaffrey and superior version of **Dalvin Cook**. McCaffrey is golden in the passing game, whereas I would call Dobbins 'good+' as a receiver. Dobbins is a similar

runner to McCaffrey…a little smaller than the typical 'power' backs but they are in such extreme shape, packed with lean muscle and with a determination/work ethic like rare few others. An NFL team could utilize Dobbins much like McCaffrey with some similar results.

I think most people are on board with the theory that Dobbins is a good or very good NFL prospect, and they are comfortable with knowing his style/ability for the NFL. No need for me to prattle on about how good he is – he rolled up/over all of his opponents in 2019, and looked fast/strong doing it, he can catch, he has good character. He's good. You know this. Let's talk about some other pieces of the puzzle to consider, things that are off the beaten path for discussions/analysis of him.

Three things (one saved for the next section)…

#1) I did not like what I saw from Dobbins in summer of 2019 (his 2018 season of work), in my summer preview scouting for the upcoming 2020 Draft potential. But then I loved his 2019 season, watching it here in 2020. What happened?

Dobbins, by his own words, 'failed' in 2018. He thought he had a terrible season (1,053 yards, but a measly 4.6 ypc). What I saw on his tape from 2018, compared to his 2019 – it looked like Dobbins tried to bulk up to near 220 pounds in 2018 and it slowed him down dramatically. He was caught from behind all the time it seemed. I thought he was very average, and in hindsight, his 2018 version was.

Coming off the disappointing 2018, Dobbins committed to transform his body for 2019. He changed his diet and dropped from 12% body fat to 8% (reportedly) and he got closer to 210-215 pounds (and he is a weightlifting monster too, all muscle). At the NFL Combine, he weighed in at 209.

What to consider here: Dobbins at 205-210 pounds is more of a **Christian McCaffrey** type prospect – short, thick, powerful. This smaller, leaner Dobbins is a 'top guy' prospect.

#2) If an NFL team tries to bulk him up for the NFL rigors, they will drop him down to 'average'. He cannot go back to his 215-220-pound ways.

He's been compared to **Ezekiel Elliott** so much, I think he and/or OSU tried to bulk him up into it…thinking he was such an athlete it wouldn't sacrifice much speed/quickness, but it did.

2017 and 2019 Dobbins is a potential 1st-round pick RB prospect.

2018, heavier, Dobbins is a 3rd+ round pick.

For my analytics, I'm pretty much ignoring/minimizing the 2018 season…but I'm aware of its impact if he tries to bulk up again.

*#3) You'll see in the next section…*

Off the field, you're are getting a clean prospect. A team captain, a leader. A workout fiend. You really have to respect what Dobbins did in 2018 and then how he corrected in 2019. He tried to see if he could carry the extra bulk…it didn't work. Kudos for trying. Kudos for recognizing it and switching back.

You'd think every top prospect would work on their body 24/7/365 in college trying to be the best and then being their best athlete self at the Combine, etc., in order to make the most money/get drafted the highest. Rare few do what Dobbins did – he has the will power and determination to transform his body for his craft, and you see how it paid off in 2019. That says a lot about the person you're getting.

Also note – he never missed a game with injury in college.

## J.K. Dobbins, Through the Lens of Our RB Scouting Algorithm:

He never missed a game in college, but he did sprain his ankle halfway into the CFB playoffs vs. Clemson…and still had 174 yards rushing, 221 total yards and a TD. Had Dobbins not gotten hurt, he might have led OSU to victory.

Because of the ankle sprain, Dobbins choose not to compete at the NFL Combine. Fearing he would not be at his best. Smart…or hiding?

That leads us to my 3rd point (from the list above)…is Dobbins that fast/quick?

Note that Dobbins was the top Nike elite camp athlete score in high school – featuring a 4.4+ 40-time, 4.09 shuttle, and 43+" vertical (yep, 43). That's pretty amazing. As a freshman, **Urban Meyer** supposedly told Dobbins he was better than **Ezekiel Elliott** at the same stage of their careers.

All Dobbins did was bench at his NFL Combine…4th best (23 reps) among the RB group.

So how fast is Dobbins? The CFB playoff game vs. Clemson gives us the clue…

Early in the game, Dobbins sprang through the interior of the line for a 68-yard TD. Playing with the tape, I deduced the following evidence/comparison technique: On that 68-yard TD run, Dobbins hit full stride/open field/gallop at his own 47-yard line - 15 yards into the run. Clemson defender **Isaiah Simmons** was playing outside linebacker and when he saw Dobbins break free up the middle, he turned and started sprinting after Dobbins. Simmons hit full stride at the OSU 44-yard line…when Dobbins was full stride at the OSU 47-yard line. Freezing the tape right there, Dobbins was three yards ahead when I'm estimating they were both at high gear sprinting.

*Note – Isaiah Simmons ran a stellar 4.39 40-time at the NFL Combine.*

Unfreezing the tape and watching the chase…as Dobbins hit the goal line for his score, I froze the tape again…Simmons was at the 2.5/3-yard line in his still full sprinting after him, never letting up. Basically, the two of them had a 50+ yard full out sprint/chase and the 4.39 runner (Simmons) barely made up an inch of ground over the 50-yard chase. I could only deduce that means Dobbins is near that 4.39 40-time range as a runner, no? **You can see for yourself on YouTube of the OSU-Clemson playoff and it's early in the game.*

Check out how 2019 changed the game vs. his 2018…

*100+ yard rushing games (keep that 2018 body in mind) by season for Dobbins:*

2017 = 6 times

2018 = 3 times

2019 = 10 times

*Yards per carry by season for Dobbins:*

2017 = 7.2

2018 = 4.6

2019 = 6.7

*Total TDs by season for Dobbins:*

2017 = 8

2018 = 12

2019 = 23

Dobbins led the nation in 15+ yard runs in 2019.

*2020 NFL Combine data:*

5'9.4"/209, 9.5" hands, 29.8" arms

23 bench reps

Skipped everything else

## The Historical RB Prospects to Whom J.K. Dobbins Most Compares Within Our System:

**Ryan Matthews** did come to my mind…a former 1st-round pick RB who had some nice years in the NFL. **Mike Weber** also came to mind before I saw the list, which scares me that a similar OSU RB who was all the rage in college for a moment/flamed (so far) as he hit the pros…but maybe Weber bulked up too much as well?

The McCaffrey comp…? McCaffrey was smaller and not as strong, when he entered the draft, but then bulked himself up to Dobbins size in the pros. Dobbins as a knock-off McCaffrey wouldn't be bad at all! Maybe, Dobbins is already there/like McCaffrey? McCaffrey added 5+ pounds and nearly doubled his bench press in the pros year two from a terrible 10 reps at the Combine. Dobbins is already McCaffrey size and stronger, and as fast/faster…just not as good a hands.

| RB Score | RB-Re | RB-ru | Last | First | College | Yr | H | H | W | Speed Metric | Agility Metric | Power Metric |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **8.949** | 8.07 | 8.22 | Dobbins | J.K. | Ohio St. | 2020 | 5 | 9.4 | 209 | 11.99 | 9.72 | 7.87 |
| **12.538** | 4.24 | 9.88 | Mathews | Ryan | Fresno St | 2010 | 5 | 11.5 | 218 | 11.09 | 4.66 | 8.77 |
| **8.511** | 10.30 | 7.68 | McCaffrey | Christian | Stanford | 2017 | 5 | 11.2 | 202 | 8.55 | 12.49 | 2.31 |
| **6.759** | 7.48 | 5.53 | Weber | Mike | Ohio St. | 2019 | 5 | 9.5 | 211 | 8.16 | 8.28 | 7.32 |
| **6.994** | 8.33 | 6.80 | Lasco | Daniel | Cal | 2016 | 6 | 0.2 | 209 | 8.15 | 2.54 | 7.13 |
| **9.724** | 5.89 | 7.32 | Moreno | Knowshon | Georgia | 2009 | 5 | 10.5 | 217 | 4.88 | 6.76 | 10.76 |

**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 a 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.*

## 2020 NFL Draft Outlook:

I keep seeing Dobbins running #3 after Taylor-Swift or Swift-Taylor in the RB draft rankings right now…a 2nd-round pick projection. I suspect Dobbins will be an early 2nd or maybe even late 1st (over Swift) in the end.

If I were an NFL GM, and I needed a running back that could go three-downs with nice receiver skills – it would be hard to pass on Dobbins as a 2nd-round cost. I don't like taking RBs that highly, but if it were a need…Dobbins would be worth it.

## NFL Outlook:

We'll see if Dobbins goes to a team to be 'the man' right away, or if he's part of a rotation or behind an established vet. Eventually, Dobbins will be an NFL three-down starter and a success (as long as he stays under 210 pounds).

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