



NFL Draft 2020 Scouting Report: WR Lynn Bowden, Kentucky

**WR grades can and will change as more information comes in from Pro Day workouts, Wonderlic test results leaked, etc. We will update ratings as new info becomes available.*

**WR-B stands for "Big-WR," a classification we use to separate the more physical, downfield/over-the-top, heavy-red-zone-threat-type WRs. Our WR-S/"Small-WRs" [are](#) profiled by our computer more as slot and/or possession-type WRs who are typically less physical and rely more on speed/agility to operate underneath the defense and/or use big speed to get open deep...they are not used as weapons in the red zone as much.*

Lynn Bowden has all the features of a beloved 'sleeper' NFL Draft prospect – he was a great return man, a legit wide receiver, and then jumped in as a wildcat QB in the 2nd-half of his senior/2019 season and ran for 190+ yards in a game, out of nowhere, in four of his eight starting QB efforts. Everyone wants/is looking for the great runner-receiver prospects in 2020... 'their Deebo' (Samuel) as it is now affectionately known as in the mainstream. Bowden is a definitive contender for that type of prospect.

Bowden can catch the ball at a high level, he is confident and elusive as a runner, and can be a game changer returning kicks and punts. He's really a **Julian Edelman**-type prospect...probably the closest thing to Edelman there is in this draft (speedy/quick/tough interior receiver, ace punt returner, can play a little QB). Not blazing speed, but good speed with an elusiveness and vision most WRs do not possess.

Bowden as a gritty, athletic interior receiver who can also work magic on bubble screens...he projects well for the NFL in that role. He has very reliable hands. He appears to have the NFL athleticism (didn't work out at the Combine, so we're not totally sure). He's definitely confident, aggressive with good vision running the ball after the catch...or just running the ball as a wildcat QB or on jet sweeps.

Talent-wise, Bowden has what it takes for the NFL...it appears. Most people will agree. So, no more talk of things we all agree on. Let's look at the not so obvious.

Two things to ponder...

#1) We get excited about these kinds of prospects – receivers, wildcat QBs...*why, they can do it all!* Where Bowden really shined was as a wildcat QB for a half of one season – literally taking shotgun snaps and either handing it off or keeping it and running (barely throwing any passes at all). It's fun to watch. He was really good at it. It's also not what he'll do in the NFL since successful wildcat running QB doesn't necessarily indicate a sure-fire NFL WR translation.

Where are all the former Navy (or other) wildcat QBs who break each other's records for rushing TDs, every few seasons at now? **Keenan Reynolds** was all the rage in 2016...1,373 rushing yards, 24 rushing



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TDs, 88 career rushing TDs as a wildcat QB...converted to WR for the NFL, was a 6th-round pick of Baltimore...and is just a journeyman bouncing around. He didn't have the athleticism or receiver skills to translate to a quick impact NFL WR. Navy QB **Zach Abey** followed **Keenan Reynolds** and ran for a bunch of TDs and was then quickly forgotten. **Malcolm Perry** took over from Abey in 2019, and rushed for 2,017 yards and 21 TDs. Perry is trying to move to WR for the 2020 NFL Draft...and he will struggle to be drafted.

So just because Bowden ran wild in a wildcat in college...doesn't mean he's extra special as an NFL translation. Also, Bowden was a terrible QB...48.1% Comp. Pct. with 3 TDs/5 INTs on 79 career passes.

Had Bowden just stayed at WR all 2019, he was on a pace to catch 70-80 passes for 700-900 yards and 5-8 TDs. Nice numbers, but nothing anyone would care about – it was the wildcat QB work that has everyone excited. That excitement over cool wildcat QB going to WR has been misguided more times than not translating to the NFL.

It might mean that Bowden is just a solid interior, slot WR prospect...not special or a future star (though it's not ruled out either).

#2) The X-factor that drops Bowden down draft boards...

Bowden is not going to help build that elusive 'culture' NFL teams always yammer about. As far as I can tell, from human observation – Bowden is going to be a handful off the field (and on it).

He's animated on the field when things don't go his way. He gets into the faces of opponents and likes to run his mouth. In a morning pre-game warm up at the 2019 Belk Bowl vs. Va Tech, Bowden was running his mouth, purposefully ran/jogged (like he was working out) over/through Virginia Tech's sideline and bumped one of their coaches on purpose, things amped up, Va Tech players jawed back, things got heated with a crowd gathered midfield with no real seriousness (just typical football bench clearing-nothing but staring and yelling) until someone pushed someone and then Bowden in a close quarters stare down of a Va Tech player hauled off and punched the opposing player in the face. Unbelievably, he didn't get suspended for the upcoming game.

Note a couple more things...

Bowden was being restrained by one of his own assistant coaches after things cooled down, but Bowden was still jawing and then shoved his coach and started yelling at him.

Also, note...everyone I saw (on both sides) was in t-shirts, heat gear tops, shorts, sweats, etc., but Bowden was shirtless and wearing a bunch of gold chains with big/gaudy medalions. Shirtless...to show off his 70+ tattoos he's proud of. Should I even ask where a college kid got the money for big gold chains and a ton of intricate tattoo work?



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My point is this, as a talent evaluator -- you're trying to impress prospective employers for the upcoming draft with hundreds of thousands of dollars on the line...and Bowden instigates a pre-game scuffle, punches a defenseless player, gets physical/insubordinate with assistant coaches, all while 10-pounds of gold are swinging around his neck/shirtless body with all his intricate tattoos on display. Is this his best look for the draft/future employment for a bigger draft spot/contract? Could we just question where the money or favors came from for all this?

In my observations -- Bowden seems to be a bit of a jerk and a future locker room and on field and off field problem. The same way you could just smell the 'jerk' dripping off **Johnny Manziel**. Can Bowden play in the NFL, does he have the talent to succeed? Yes. Is he going to be a problem and possible bust due to off-field activities? Possibly? It at least questions how much you want to invest in him from an NFL perspective.

To me, in a quick description, Bowden is a 'C' grade prospect that with a good/humble/worker attitude could pull him up to a 'B' grade prospect, and top 100 pick and quicker NFL success...OR one that his d-bag attitude is going to drag him down to a 'D' grade prospect...a B-C talent with D-F character concerns.

Could he be solid/successful in the NFL? Yes. Would I draft him? Unfortunately, no. Why, with all the great WR values of the same size/skillset available the past 2+ years, would I chase after a potential problem? The upside isn't that great.

Lynn Bowden, Through the Lens of Our WR Scouting Algorithm:

Bowden's receiver totals in his 13 games at WR (2018-2019), before he became the wildcat QB starter for Kentucky mid-2019...

73 catches, 875 yards, 5 TDs...and, again, you wouldn't really care that much about him if this were his WR numbers for 2019 and he never played wildcat QB.

Bowden's rusher totals before/after he became the wildcat QB star...

(30 games) 34 carries, 161 rushing yards, no TDs (4.7 ypc)...again, you would not care about him up to this point.

(final 8 college games) 172 carries, 1,379 rushing yards, 13 TDs (8.0 ypc)...every game 99 or more rushing yards with three 200+ yard rushing games.



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14 career fumbles (7 lost) is a bit of a concern. Bowden gets caught trying to make plays, dancing around too much and is open to getting the ball jarred loose as a runner and as a return man.

2020 NFL Combine data...

5'10.5"/204, 9 ¾" hands, 30 7/8" arms

13 bench press

Did no other drills

The Historical WR Prospects to Whom Lynn Bowden Most Compares Within Our System:

Julian Edelman and **Curtis Samuel** are the best examples of high impact players at other positions that were best suited to play WR in the NFL. Edelman a much better example of the style Bowden will deploy in the pros, but Samuel was a talented runner of the ball like Bowden in college...as well as an ace WR.

<u>WR Score</u>	<u>Draft Yr</u>	<u>Last</u>	<u>First</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>Power Strngth Metric</u>	<u>Speed Agility Metric</u>	<u>Hands Metric</u>
7.283	2020	Bowden	Lynn	Kentucky	5	10.5	204	8.35	8.32	8.42
8.345	2009	Edelman	Julian	Kent State	5	10.3	195	8.56	10.80	8.38
8.855	2017	Samuel	Curtis	Ohio State	5	10.5	196	8.54	12.12	9.04
8.103	2012	Ebert	Jeremy	Northwestern	5	10.8	200	9.28	11.64	10.15
5.309	2014	Wilson	Albert	Georgia St	5	9.3	202	8.55	7.99	8.11
7.853	2010	Roberts	Andre	Citadel	5	10.7	195	8.59	12.44	9.31
9.041	2011	Pilares	Kealoha	Hawaii	5	9.7	199	12.13	10.49	7.61

**A score of 7.0+ is where we start to take a Small-WR prospect more seriously. A score of 8.50+ is where we see a stronger correlation of a Small-WR 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 Small-WR.*

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



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Overall WR score = A combination of several on-field performance measures, including refinement for strength of opponents faced. Mixed with all the physical measurement metrics, rated historically in our database.

“Power-Strength” = A combination of unique metrics surrounding physical-size profiling, bench press strength, etc. High scorers here project to be more physical, better blockers, and less injury-prone.

“Speed-Agility” = A combination of unique metrics surrounding speed, agility, physical size, mixed with some on-field performance metrics. High scorers here project to have a better YAC and show characteristics to be used as deep threats/create separation.

“Hands” = A combination of unique metrics surrounding on-field performance in college, considering the strength of opponents played. Furthermore, this data considers some physical profiling for hand size, etc. High scorers here have a better track record of college statistical performance, and overall this projects the combination of performance and physical data for the next level.

2020 NFL Draft Outlook:

Bowden’s off-field issues have him falling to a 4th-5th-round prospect projection. He should be a 3rd-4th-rounder on talent alone. As an outside analyst, the more I see him fall on day three...the more I would know the NFL investigators found more to worry about in Bowden’s background.

If I were an NFL GM, he’d be red marked as ‘undraftable’. There’s no reason, in this day and age, with the number of talented WR prospects, to waste a ton of energy and money on a possible cancer like Bowden -- my opinion.

NFL Outlook:

Just because he might be a jerk and/or off-field concern, doesn’t mean he won’t be a good NFL WR. If Bowden lands right, he might play right away and be a really solid slot/interior receiver with a good return game and very productive rookie...just wouldn’t happen in my organization. He always could have a change of attitude and become a solid citizen and nice NFL player.

There’s also risk he talks his way down the depth chart and out of the league in short order...he’s just not THAT talented.

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