NFL Draft 2020 Scouting Report: CB Jeff Okudah, Ohio State and C.J. Henderson, Florida

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

I'm going to do these two prospect reports together because they are considered #1-2 in the class at cornerback, and both possible top 10-15 picks. Okudah for sure top 10…Henderson, depends who you ask. Entering the 2019 season, Henderson was probably the top-rated corner in the nation…for scouts, Okudah has stolen that label from him after 2019 season.

I've been pro-Henderson since 2019, through the 2020 Combine and up to the day I studied both guys deeper to write this report. I was interested to see if my mind would change with a deeper, parallel study.

Going into this, I don't believe **Kristian Fulton**/LSU or **Trevon Diggs**/Ala are potential #1 corners in this class. To me, it's Henderson-Okudah as candidates for 'top corner in 2019'. Deeper study on Fulton, Diggs, and the rest of the crop…I might find one that changes my mind…but right now, through all the preview work and initial data research – it's down to Okudah and Henderson, thus the joint scouting report.

OK, let's see which one of them is the better prospect…

First, let's compare them physically:

6'0.6"/204, 9.00" hands, 31 5/8" arms, 75 7/8" wingspan = **Henderson**

6'1.1"/205, 9 1.8" hands, 32 3/8" arms, 78 5/8" wingspan = **Okudah**

Physical frames are about the same/similar. Okudah has more reach as an advantage.

4.39 40-time, 1.56 10-yard, 20 bench reps, 37.5" vertical, 10'7" broad = **Henderson**

4.48 40-time, 1.60 10-yard, 11 bench reps, 41" vertical, 11'3" broad = **Okudah**

The 4.39 40-time for Henderson is more on the special side. There are many mid-4.4s runners in the NFL (like Okudah). Not as many who can hit the 4.3s. Henderson has the 10-yard burst edge, which is key. And Henderson nearly doubles Okudah's bench ability…which can matter for press coverage/getting physical with bigger WRs in the NFL.

The winner physically/athletically: **C.J. Henderson**, by a step. Henderson is faster and stronger…I'll take that (on paper) over a slight edge in reach. Neither did agility times at the Combine, but just looking at the tape…give that edge to Henderson as well.

Second, let's compare them in coverage:

I have to give Henderson the edge here too. When he wants to, Henderson is the better man-to-man cover guy. I see some lapses in Henderson's play every so often (and we'll explore this more in a bit)…but when he's on, he's a shutdown corner. He reminds me a bit of **Jalen Ramsey** – Ramsey was somewhat arrogant in his college play, but he knew he was great (and he was), so he drifted in college sometimes. Henderson played on an average team, and he wasn't always engaged and gave up a play here or there…which analysts/evaluators will hold against him, but as I evaluate, at their best, Henderson is the better of the two.

Literally, opposing QBs would know Henderson was on one side…so, their drop back and pass play was already tilted towards the other non-Henderson side. Henderson was rarely challenged and got bored at times – this is a sign of his greatness, not so much of a weakness. QBs wanted nothing to do with his side of the field.

I watched Clemson vs. Ohio State 2019 season CFB playoffs…and **Trevor Lawrence** had no qualms going at Okudah (and Okudah played well). Better teams/QBs seemed more willing to challenge Okudah than Henderson…just my impression from the tape.

I'm not saying Okudah is bad in anyway, just suffers a little in comparison to Henderson. I also noted on tape Okudah giving more space/cushion, and WRs getting open more on Okudah than they did against Henderson. When plays were made against Henderson, they were a bit fluky/jump ball or up for grabs plays. Okudah also had the benefit of **Chase Young** often rushing from the same side of the field as Okudah played – QBs didn't have a ton of time to make decisions to throw at Okudah.

The winner as best-in-coverage: **C.J. Henderson**. He's just quicker and stronger. No slam to Okudah.

Third, let's consider their run play ability/desires:

It's not as critical, but note Okudah is a better, more willing tackler than Henderson. Body-wise, Henderson is built to be a better tackler…but CJH tackled like old **Deion Sanders** too much, tackling like a guy protecting his body/NFL future. Henderson had a lot of ole' moments as a tackler, or otherwise disinterested. Okudah was very willing to get in and make hits. Henderson might turn this skill back on when he hits the pros.

The winner as best tackler: **Jeff Okudah**. He clearly demonstrated the ability/desire to make plays as a tackler in 2019, especially in the run game.

Lastly, let's consider intangibles/off field:

Okudah wins this hands down. He also plays for Ohio State (which is deemed better for CBs than Florida, and is also the more interesting team and one football people watched more). That combination is driving Okudah as way better than Henderson for scouts.

Okudah is smart, a scholar athlete one of his OSU seasons. He handles himself well in interviews. He's a good guy. Everyone likes him.

Henderson comes off a bit (to me) as a jerk. A guy who has been waiting to go pro since after his freshman season. A guy who missed games in 2019 with an ankle injury and then skipped playing in the bowl game for his draft protection. I don't begrudge him any of that…just noting 'diva' is dripping off Henderson a bit, whereas smarter/high-brow coaches will like Okudah (he's a **Matt Patricia** guy). '*Win now*'/under pressure coaches may reach for Henderson to half save their 2020, they hope.

In summary, for me, if you want a good cover corner prospect who is no issue in the locker room – you want Okudah.

If you want the guy who will make the 3rd & 5 critical stop against a Pro Bowl WR, and a guy who might become a top five shutdown corner in the pros, *and then a guy who goes all **Jalen Ramsey** on the coach/organization when it's getting close to $$$ time/long-term deal talk* – you want **C.J. Henderson**.

Jeff Okudah and C.J. Henderson, Through the Lens of Our CB Scouting Algorithm:

We already did all the physical comparisons in the first section. Additionally, it's difficult to glean a bunch from good/great CB prospects' college statistical production because teams tend to not throw their way. However, here are some random statistical tidbits on these two players…

-- **Jeff Okudah** did not allow a pass play over 15 yards in 2019. He was not called for any PI's/holding calls either, per reporting. That sounds good, but is it? Was it because he's golden in coverage…or because he wasn't in tight on wide receivers constantly?

-- **Jeff Okudah** was tied for the **11th**-fastest 40-time among CB prospects at the Combine, Henderson tied for **2nd**-fastest.

-- Henderson was tied for **3rd** in bench press reps among CB prospects at the Combine, Okudah **dead last** on the bench.

-- Okudah was **1st** in highest vertical leap, Henderson **4th** best among CB prospects in the vertical at the Combine.

-- Okudah had **the longest** arm measurement among CBs at the Combine, Henderson **4th** longest.

The Historical CB Prospects to Whom Jeff Okudah and C.J. Henderson Most Compares Within Our System:

The computer models weigh in – and it says that there are more 'shutdown corner' or 'star' power indications with **C.J. Henderson** than with Okudah. The historical DNA of Okudah is more with #2/solid corners…not shutdown/stars, which I think sums up my thinking from all the things I've seen/studied on them.

CB Grade	Last	First	Draft Yr	College	H	H	W	Cover Rating	Speed Metrics	Agility Metric	Tackle Metric
9.261	Henderson	C.J.	2020	Florida	6	0.6	204	9.42	7.02	7.96	8.12
8.468	Ramsey	Jalen	2016	Florida St	6	1.2	209	8.94	6.85	7.34	9.24
8.879	Amerson	David	2013	NC State	6	1.0	205	10.86	9.01	6.68	8.90
7.583	Amukamara	Prince	2011	Nebraska	6	0.0	206	7.74	8.20	6.09	8.19
10.006	Talib	Aqib	2008	Kansas	6	0.6	202	16.40	6.32	8.14	7.68
7.354	Milliner	Dee	2013	Alabama	5	11.7	201	9.84	7.34	3.96	7.83

CB Grade	Last	First	Draft Yr	College	H	H	W	Cover Rating	Speed Metrics	Agility Metric	Tackle Metric
7.266	Okudah	Jeff	2020	Ohio St.	6	1.1	205	8.11	3.41	7.80	6.16
6.691	Witherspoon	Ahkello	2017	UConn	6	2.6	198	7.61	3.25	6.82	4.79
8.193	King	Kevin	2017	Washington	6	3.0	200	9.46	3.92	11.70	6.67
2.812	McDonald	Dexter	2015	Kansas	6	0.6	203	6.99	-0.02	-0.49	5.53

**The ratings are based on a 1–10 rating scale, but a prospect can score over 10.0+ and less than 0.0*

OVERALL RATING *-- We merge the data from physical measurables, skill times/counts from the NFL Combine/Pro Days, with college performance data available on pass coverage/tackles, etc. and grade it compared to our database history of all college CBs, with a focus on which CBs went on to be good-great-elite in the NFL. We found characteristics/data points that the successful NFL CBs had in common in college, that most other CB prospects could not match/achieve.*

Scoring with a rating over a ***7.00+*** *in our system is where we start to take a CB prospect more seriously. Most of the future NFL successful college CBs scored* ***8.00+****, and most of the NFL superior CBs pushed scores more in the* ***9.00+*** *levels...and future NFL busts will sneak in there from time to time.* ***10.00+*** *is where most of the elite NFL CBs tend to score in our system analysis.*

COVERAGE *-- A combination of on-field data/performance and physical profile data*

SPEED *-- Measurables from a perspective of straight-line speed, burst, etc.*

AGILITY *-- Measurables for lateral movements, quick cuts, body type, speed, etc.*

POWER *-- A look at physical size, tackling productivity in college, other physical measurables. One of the side benefits/intentions here, is to see which CBs may be more of a model for a conversion to playing safety successfully in the NFL. Also denotes CBs who are more physical/will have higher tackle totals...over pure speed/coverage CBs.*

2020 NFL Draft Outlook:

So far, the media/analyst trend is that Okudah is a top 5 overall prospect, no lower than top 10. On the other hand, they all (magically) agree Henderson is #11-20 overall. I would bet on the constant media drumbeat forcing NFL teams to follow suit with how they draft these two guys. However, I have a funny feeling Henderson may go top 10 and ahead of Okudah…because reality was recognized by some team looking for a shutdown corner. Henderson #9 to Jacksonville seems like it has some potential – the backfill for **Jalen Ramsey**.

If I were an NFL GM, I'd take Henderson ahead of Okudah without blinking…maybe a mild blink because I know the headaches I might have come contract time in 3-4 years, but I wouldn't even know if I'd be employed by a team in 3-4 years – so, I'd live for the now and get the higher impact player, take the deal with the devil for the now.

NFL Outlook:

I'll agree with our computer models…

Henderson will be a #1 corner, and possible top shutdown corner threat.

Okudah will be a nice #2 corner everyone will forget about in short order but is a respected/solid starter.

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