**Players Worth Reaching For**

***Chad Mossing***

Generally, in fantasy drafts the word “Reach”, it comes with a negative connotation. No one wants to be that guy when you pick your player the rest of the room yells “REACH!!” However, with risk comes reward and playing it safe all the time only gets you so far in fantasy. Drafts are won in the first two rounds (although you can lose theme there) and people who “reached” on Kupp, Carson, Ekeler, and Godwin to name a few, had an extra weapon at their disposal almost every week.

The trick in drafting, and in can be in any format, is which guys to target and when can you pick them while getting the most value? If you are in a competitive, and active league the chances are the sleepers you have circled on your sheet may be the same players they have circled. So, if you’re trying to get superior value with your sleepers there is a real possibility that your league mates can snatch them up before you do. A few years ago in my league I had a snake draft with my most competitive league and I had a few players that I felt were the mid round sleepers that could bust out into first round players, but I got too cute and tried to pass on them for one more round. The yearly league cellar dweller, and his buddy bye week sandwiched me in the draft order and they both became American hero Chris Kyle and sniped my sleepers at both turns leaving me to scramble.

After that year watching both my sleepers become studs, I concluded while value in drafts is always important, finding players that are breakout candidates in those mid rounds, and being aggressive is a swiss army knife in drafts. To find sleepers with the potential of breaking out or bouncing back, you need to look at projected opportunity and talent. I have listed players with opportunity to break out along with their current ADP and what rounds you can feel comfortable taking them earlier.

**Todd Gurley: RB19 / ADP 40**

When I looked at these ranking it shocked me to see Gurley so low. I’m going start trending on twitter with #GrabGurley until he gets back into the early to mid-second round conversation. If you #GrabGurley in the third round of your draft they might as well give you the trophy if you don’t punt on the rest of your draft. I’m throwing my laptop across the draft room in celebration and planned on getting fined by my commissioner for excessive celebration.

This man walks into such a perfect fit of an offense that just on pure volume alone will be fringe RB1 at the end of the year. He finished as the RB14 Iast year behind a cartoon offensive line, and an organization scared of arthritis. I’m going to use actual medical information to support why it’s not that bad. Osteoarthritis is slow degeneration of the knee and is very common on people who have evasive surgery.

Gurley has had this since college, and he put up a two year stretch worthy of fantasy record books. An to note he continually showed his frustration not getting the ball last year. If he was physically hurting I doubt he’d be calling for the ball.

He’s 25 and not 55 so recovery and treatment should be positive. Behind Gurley on the depth chart is a backfield with a combined YPC average of nonexistent. He’s getting the lion’s share of the work and I’m #GrabbingGurley in the second-round, or paying a little more in auction drafts if Ekeler, Sanders, and Drake have gone.

**Calvin Ridley: WR18 / ADP 43**

I’m starting off with back to back Falcons, but that defense makes this offense so fantasy friendly it just happens. This offseason he has risen in the wide receiver rankings from the mid 20’s to WR17. Yet if his ADP doesn’t creep up anymore, he is still a bargain.

Ridley’s 2019 stat line was 63 rec. 866 yards and 7 TDs in just 13 games (93 targets). Don’t forget that Hooper and Sanu both will not be there all season either. Wide receivers are typically seen as 3rd year breakouts, the season when everything clicks, and the hyped-up rookies mature into the stars that franchises love.

You are drafting him at his floor which is ideal for value. Currently going mid fourth round or later, especially if you ignored WR early and are looking for someone who could possibly fill the low end WR1 hole look no further feel free to snatch him up mid to late third over players like Woods, Kupp, Sutton or Brown all going around the same time.

**D.K. Metcalf: WR23 / ADP 54**

If you are looking for a solid and capable WR2 with Top 10 upside stop when you see the name D.K. Metcalf. An athletic freak who developed faster than the Seahawks envisioned, is another high floor high ceiling option. As a principal when I look for WR’s to draft I love looking at their QB situation. Great QB’s have a direct and positive effect on the WR’s they throw to, and Russell Wilson is extremely efficient.

The most attractive puzzle pieces for me with Metcalf are that he is far and away Seattle’s best red zone target which should provide fruitful opportunities. The other piece is the state of the 2020 Seahawks team. Both starting running backs are coming off serious injuries and that defense is looking less and less attractive by the year which can lead to a more pass heavy plan of attack. His immense upside for me lets me think about taking him fourth round. Compared to his current ADP which is somewhere in the fifth.

You can see the correlation between both Ridley and Metcalf, and what makes them so appealing, Good to great QB play, positive game scripts because lack of defense, and just natural talent that is ready to take a leap.

**Carson Wentz: QB12 / ADP 90**

I’m a big fan on waiting for QB’s. The difference after Mahomes and Jackson is probably going to be a total of 80 points separating QB3 and QB 12. Which makes grabbing a Josh Allen or Matt Ryan in round five quite questionable. Leaving me to scoop up another RB2 or WR2 like a kid in Universal Studios picking out a wand from Diagon Alley. When Carson Wentz plays at least 14 games he has never finished lower than a QB1. With a great offensive line and weapons around him healthy look for him to carve out some good games against a super friendly schedule.

**Matthew Stafford: QB13 / ADP 109**

A lot of people look at the Detroit Lions and say they suck. They wouldn’t be wrong either. Although blaming Stafford is the easy way out. Statistically he’s been one of the better QB’s this decade. He’s had ups and downs for sure but looking at it more closely you can see why he could be a steal.

First the Lions defense just did addition by subtraction this off season so another projected pass heavy script. He also has some nice match ups this year including ARI, JAC, ATL, MIN twice, CAR, and TB. He was putting up career numbers with OC Darrell Bevell his first competent OC since Scott Linehan.

Both Stafford and Wentz are the most likely to hop into that QB1 territory, and if you pair them together you have one of the top rated QB duos for fantasy points based on matchups.

**Zack Moss: RB48 / ADP 152**

Man, was I circling Devin Singletary like a hawk pre-NFL draft? Then Buffalo decides to take their third-round pick and draft this mean streak runner Zack Moss. Underrated in the passing game as well the Bills have already said they want to use him in the Frank Gore role. This means all the valuable touches inside the twenty are in al l likely hood going to Moss, as well as those delicious goal line carries. Gives me the goose bumps thinking about Mike Tolbert and the vulture he was.

Although Moss is much more than old TD Mike, this guy is in line for some serious work when it counts. 10-15 touches a game gives him serious flex consideration on certain weeks, and one injury to Singletary and we have a weekly RB2. Just watch out for Josh Allen scrambling for the pylon.

**Boston Scott: RB55 / ADP 164**

Did anyone realize that Boston Scott had two top 10 finishes last year in the last four weeks? If you didn’t you might want to read up on this guy. A lot of attention has been on the Eagles not signing a running back in free agency, then doubled down on that philosophy with going Zero RB Strategy in the draft. Which has driven Miles Sanders up draft boards. Now I’m fully on the Miles Sanders bandwagon but if I can’t get him for whatever reason I’m circling Boston Scott.

The Eagles doing nothing whatsoever to their RB room is showing their faith not only in Miles Sanders, but also Scott as well. Doug Peterson loves his RBBC, but does he tweak it a bit for Sanders to get more touches? Probably. But, there’s a chance he doesn’t too. Regardless I think 8-12 touches a game for Scott, who also caught 26 of 28 passes last year is his floor.

This is a sneaky good handcuff with a chance at stand alone value if Peterson refuses to use Sanders as a workhorse, or if Sanders misses time. This guy has juice racking up 350 total yards and four TDs on just 61 touches.

**Other Notable Players Watch**: Anthony McFarland, Antonio Gibson, Michael Pittman Jr., Damien Harris