

Film Friday: Mylan Graham's Speed, Route Running A Weapon



Every Friday, Buckeye Sports Bulletin will be taking some time to break down Ohio State's recruiting class of 2024 on film to see what each prospect brings to Columbus. Reviews will take place in the order in which prospects verbally committed to the Buckeyes.

It doesn't matter how much it's written about, discussed amongst Ohio State circles or given national media attention, what OSU receivers coach and offensive coordinator Brian Hartline has done recruiting and developing his position room is second to none.

Less than four months after landing a commitment from the best wide receiver prospect in the class of 2024, Hollywood (Fla.) Chaminade-Madonna Prep five-star Jeremiah Smith (6-3, 198), Hartline collected a second five-star prospect in New Haven, Ind. pass catcher Mylan Graham (6-1, 170).

Graham is the nation's 19th-best prospect regardless of position and sixth at wide receiver. His speed has been raved about by scouts, but it takes more than running fast in a straight line to have five stars next to your name. Let's see what makes Graham such a can't-miss complement to Smith.

To view the full highlight reel these clips were pulled from, visit here:
<https://www.hudl.com/video/3/14469385/63693b35e97b9508ccdd4b96>



This play had no business going for a 95-yard touchdown, as it did.

It's a simple flip out to Graham intended to gain a handful of yards and gain New Haven some room. His speed holds such an intimidation factor downfield that the opposing defensive coordinator has — perhaps reasonably — called for extremely soft coverage against him, defensive backs far, far back from the line of scrimmage.

Before Graham turns on the afterburners, there's a glimpse of his shakiness. He jukes in and then back out to gain leverage on his defender, then it's his burst that allows him to separate as he wheels around to the sideline. From there it's a footrace, and Graham isn't losing one of those.

When BSB spoke to 247Sports scout Allen Trieu about Graham's game, he mentioned that short-area

burst is more important for a football player than top-end speed, and burst is the number one trait that stands out to him about Graham. Plays like this showcase why. There aren't many players in America that could evade two defensive backs up the sideline like that.



Route running is one of the most important aspects of playing wide receiver. Making contested catches is cool, but it's easier for one's quarterback and one's offense to get open in the first place. Route running is how you generate that separation.

Graham's agility, burst and speed give him the athletic foundations to run great routes. All that remains is perhaps the most important element, technique. What he shows in this clip is a polished comeback route.

He keeps his eyes downfield the entire way before his break, baiting his defender into thinking it's a fly route. Once he hits his snap-off point, he stops on a dime and turns quickly with light feet to accelerate back the opposite direction toward the sideline.

Then, being the type of player he is, Graham weaves through a pack of five defenders, makes one final safety miss and glides into the endzone.



This is yet another clip of Graham making a defense look silly. It also displays why, in the opinion of many, he will be a slot receiver at the next level for Ohio State, and a formidable one at that.

With more field to work with splitting the difference between outside receivers and offensive linemen, slot receivers tend to be shiftier players with a quick burst, players that can take advantage of the extra space for routes and make plays after the catch. Former Buckeye wideout and first-round draft pick of the Seattle Seahawks Jaxon Smith-Njigba fit that mold. Graham does his well.

His elusiveness and agility in the open field doesn't need to be explained in this clip. It's evident to anyone watching. Graham makes three defenders miss with two jaw-dropping jukes and a bit of athleticism, then slices through the remaining secondary for a touchdown.

Graham could find a role as a return man as soon as his first season in Columbus with his skill set. It'd be a shock if he didn't find some way to make significant contributions to the offense by his second year.