

2021 NFL Draft: Ohio State CB Shaun Wade Selected No. 160 By the Baltimore Ravens



Ohio State cornerback Shaun Wade ended his 2019 campaign as a borderline day one pick in the majority of draft projections after a dominant season in Ohio State's nickel position during his redshirt sophomore campaign. However, the Florida product wanted to prove himself as an outside cornerback, and despite the coronavirus pandemic that nearly shut down Ohio State's 2020 season, Wade returned for one more season in Columbus.

A year later, Wade has made his way to the NFL, but not as a first-rounder, as he was once projected. No, the former five-star was selected in the fifth round by the Baltimore Ravens with the No. 160 pick.

Wade had a challenging 2020 season. Under new defensive coordinator Kerry Coombs and playing his first season as an outside cornerback, he frequently looked uncomfortable and struggled against top receiver competition. The Ravens may look to move him back inside at the next level, where he thrived in 2019. He recorded 35 tackles, 1 TFL and 2 interceptions in 2020 and was still named an All-American, despite the struggles that sent him tumbling down draft boards.

In his draft guide, Dane Brugler of The Athletic articulated those struggles and slotted him as his No. 23 cornerback.

A three-year starter at Ohio State, Wade was a Swiss Army knife defensive back in coordinator Kerry Coombs' five-man secondary. After playing predominantly inside at safety and cornerback his first three years in Columbus, he moved to outside cornerback in 2020 and struggled mightily despite earning AllAmerican accolades (only FBS player to allow 30-plus completions, 500-plus receiving yards and six-plus touchdown catches in 2020). Wade has the athletic traits and length to stick with routes up and down the field, but his fundamentals quickly break down and he is too reactionary at the top of routes. While his versatility to play anywhere in the secondary is a positive trait, he hasn't shown a natural feel at any specific position. Overall, Wade is an intriguing talent with his size, athleticism and ball skills, but his lax technique/awareness and uneven compete skills make him an enigma regarding his ideal NFL position and development trajectory.

Via Dane Brugler of The Athletic