

Film Friday: Max LeBlanc Could Be A Major Receiving 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.

After being promoted to his first full-time college coaching position as Ohio State's tight ends coach this offseason, Keenan Bailey got a chance to snag his first commitment on the recruiting trail in short order.

On April 15, the Buckeyes and Bailey secured a pledge from Chattanooga (Tenn.) Baylor School four-star Max LeBlanc, a 6-4, 222-pound prospect who was also courted by Alabama, Michigan, Oklahoma, Penn State and Tennessee among many others.

LeBlanc is the nation's No. 268 prospect and 14th-best tight end per the 247Sports composite rankings. Here's a dive into his film to see what he brings to Columbus.

To view the full highlight reel this clips were pulled from, visit here:
<https://www.hudl.com/video/3/14807583/6361639f96765006942fc228>



It's easy to see why LeBlanc put this clip first in his highlight reel. This play demonstrates a lot of traits he possesses that other tight end prospects do not.

First of all, LeBlanc's ability to play out of the slot shows off the faith that his high school team possessed in him as a receiver. He had 39 receptions for 695 yards and three touchdowns in 2022.

The call is a crossing route for LeBlanc, and he jettisons across the field to make an easy, short reception. The far more impressive aspect of this play is what he does after the catch. He uses a clean

juke move and a stiff-arm to separate from defenders, then bolts up the sideline and into the endzone.

LeBlanc possesses a blend of quickness, agility and speed that make it possible for him to score on this play. Those same traits will help make him a strong route runner at the next level.



Speaking of aspects of LeBlanc's game that are strong, multiple clips such as this one throughout his reel demonstrate an ability to win contested catches with strong hands and effective body positioning.

LeBlanc runs a post route here, slipping in behind the opposing nickelback to give his quarterback a window between the second and third levels of the defense. Knowing the safety is located behind him, he uses his body to help shield the defender from the ball as he crashes down on the play.

So many high school tight ends are looking to trap the ball with their bodies. But here, the safety has a chance to bat the ball away if LeBlanc lets it get that far. Instead, he catches with his hands and clamps down strong to ensure it remains a catch. Hanging on through contact, he nets his team 21 yards and a first down.



Now for the other half of playing tight end — blocking. When he gets a head of steam and is asked to act as a lead blocker in space, LeBlanc does a great job acquiring his target and delivering an impactful blow. That's exactly what he does on this play, an off-tackle run to the right.

One area he'll need to improve is his in-line blocking. Tight ends are asked to put a hand in the dirt and fire off the line of scrimmage a lot in Ohio State's scheme, and in the handful of in-line blocking clips on his tape he showed he still has room to grow in that spot. He'll also bulk up at Ohio State from his current 222 pounds, which should help provide a bit more punch and movement.

There's a lot of depth in front of LeBlanc in Ohio State's tight end room, though sneakily not a whole lot after what will be his first year in Columbus. LeBlanc has the ability to compete for playing time, perhaps as a backup or in the "Hammer" role Mitch Rossi occupied in 2022, by his second year.