

Washington Redskins Reunite Dwayne Haskins, Terry McLaurin As Ohio State QB-WR Combo Continues In NFL

On the eve of the 2019 NFL draft last Wednesday, former Ohio State quarterback Dwayne Haskins had one wish before he heard his name called.

“Whatever team picks me I just need one small thing, just one,” Haskins said in a tweet as he lobbied for a franchise to take his three Buckeyes receivers — Parris Campbell, Johnnie Dixon and Terry McLaurin — with him.

When the draft came and went last Thursday through Saturday, Haskins was the quickest off the board among the four. The Washington Redskins selected him with the 15th overall pick in the first round.

Campbell came next in the second round when the Indianapolis Colts selected him with the 59th overall pick. Dixon went undrafted, but signed with the Houston Texans as a priority free agent.

Between the action for Campbell and Dixon, McLaurin landed in Washington when the Redskins selected him with the 76th overall pick in the third round, giving Haskins his wish as he reunited with the deep-ball mate from 2018. Haskins and McLaurin averaged 20.0 yards per catch with 11 touchdowns as OSU’s pass-heavy offense took off.

“Dwayne has a lot of confidence in him, and (McLaurin) has a lot of confidence in Dwayne,” said Washington head coach Jay Gruden. “It’s a good natural fit.”

Gruden and the Redskins witnessed the Haskins-McLaurin connection firsthand March 20 at Ohio State’s pro day. Among four head coaches on hand inside the Woody Hayes Athletic Center, Gruden saw McLaurin run “every route like it was his last route” with the same speed he showcased March 2 during the NFL scouting combine at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, highlighted by the wideout’s 40-yard-dash time of 4.35 seconds.

“He has a skill set to fit into each position at wideout,” said Washington director of college scouting Kyle Smith. “At ‘X,’ the guy can roll. ... He can take the top off the coverage. As a slot receiver, he’s got route ability, he’s got toughness and instincts. As a ‘Z,’ he is a point-of-attack guy because he blocks his butt off.”

McLaurin’s intangibles are well-known, but he particularly emerged with his explosiveness on offense in 2018. After a redshirt year in 2014 and then three steady seasons from 2015-17, McLaurin broke out as a fifth-year senior with 35 receptions for 701 yards and a long of 75 across all 14 games — fueling Haskins, who completed 373 of 533 passes (70.0 percent) for 4,831 yards and 50 touchdowns to eight interceptions.

“Dwayne, he brings to the table a competitive edge,” said McLaurin (6-0, 208), who compared his game to veteran NFL receiver DeSean Jackson (5-10, 172) as he impacts various aspects of offense and

special teams. “He makes my job a lot easier. When I’m out of my breaks the ball is already there in great spots for me to make plays.”

Haskins (6-3, 231) and McLaurin look to immediately impact Washington’s offense, which may feature familiar elements of the Buckeyes’ scheme for the past two years under then-offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach Ryan Day. Now OSU’s first-year head coach, Day worked with Redskins offensive coordinator Kevin O’Connell when the two spent 2016 on then-head coach Chip Kelly’s San Francisco 49ers staff — Day as quarterbacks coach and O’Connell on special projects.

“The college game is different than the NFL game,” Smith said. “What we have to do is break down and get inside of his mind and let (Haskins) understand the west coast offense, understanding defenses, coverages, all those things that are so much different than the college game, so he’s going to have a chance to do that.”

Haskins and McLaurin head to Washington for rookie minicamp May 10-12 with the rest of its draft selections, free-agent signees and other invitees. Once the two get going, they look to pick up where their time in Columbus left off.

“I had one year in college and I feel like I showed all I could as far as one year — I broke a lot of records, did a lot of great things and I feel like I did a lot of stuff that shows that I can translate to the NFL,” Haskins said. “Just being able to do what I did at a high level, I thought it was the right choice for me to make that change to go to the pros and I’m grateful that the Redskins thought so as well and selected me.”

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