

McKinney	Benardrick	Mississippi State	MLB	! 7.88
Last Name	First Name	College	Position	Final Grade
6'4"	246	4.66		
Height	Weight	40 speed		
ATHLETIC ABILITY	SECTION GRADE:		8.3	
Q.A.B Quick Feet C.O.D. Flexibility Coordination	McKinney is a very athletic linebacker that is more fast than quick due to the slight stiffness in his hips and taller frame. He possesses good quickness, lateral agility, and balance. He does not have the quickest of feet but you have to remember this is a big tall linebacker that will cover ground quicker with his long strides. He is a little bit stiff in his hips in order to change direction on the dime being the reason why he struggles in coverage. He has great athleticism, therefore showing good flexibility and coordination. However, he needs to work on his flexibility a little more in order for him to play looser when in coverage at the next level.			
COMPETITIVENESS	SECTION GRADE:		8.7	
Toughness Clutch Play Production Consistency Team Player Pride / Quit	McKinney is a big, physical, athletic linebacker that will thump you in the run game. Both McKinney and the Mississippi State Defense came up with clutch goal line stands as well as stops on 4 th down plays. He was one of the all-time great linebackers in Mississippi State history while becoming the program's first first-team All-American linebacker since 1999. His production speaks for itself racking up 244 tackles, 19.5 tackles for loss, 7.5 sacks, 7 pass breakups, and recovered six fumbles while playing in 39 career game (36 starts). There should be no questions about him as a team player as he was the leader and captain of Mississippi State's "Psycho Defense." With that being said, he is also a very consistent player that will not take plays off. Lastly, he is the guy that you want out there on short yardage/goal line situations because he takes pride in holding opposing offenses out of his end zone.			
MENTAL ALERTNESS	SECTION GRADE:		8.3	
Learn / Retain Inst/Reaction Concentration	McKinney has great instincts for the LB position allowing him to read and react to plays naturally. It takes smarts/high football IQ in order to read offensive formations and communicate to teammates as he was doing as the team captain. You can tell he is willing to learn as a former team captain as well as not only process the information, but also being able to call out the plays to his teammates. He does not make the same mistake twice because he learns from them and does not play out of his comfort zone. He plays the game with great concentration but will allow players to get behind him when in coverage.			

STRENGTH / EXPLOSION		SECTION GRADE:		8.5
Body Type	McKinney has great size for a linebacker at 6'4", 246 lbs. He is built very strong being why he is such a durable player and will be a warrior for a full 60 minutes, much like the way Patrick Willis approached every snap. He is explosive when lined up near the line of scrimmage. However, he shows more straight-line speed than quickness due to his frame and long strides. He excels as a run stopper and as a vocal leader for a defense from the MLB position. It is rare that you see guys come out this young and are immediately leaders of a defense. Some linebackers that have come out recently that he compares to from a leadership standpoint are guys like Luke Kuechly and Bobby Wagner. He plays with good leverage and body control when in pursuit and makes sure when he is making a tackle on a ball carrier that they do not push forward for extra yardage. Lastly, he is always around the ball being the reason why he has recovered multiple fumbles strictly off of awareness throughout his career.			
Durability				
Explosion				
Play Strength				
GDE	CATEGORY	COMMENTS DESCRIPTION	GAMES VIEWED	COMBINE NOTES
8.3	READ AND REACT	He is able to read and react to plays naturally. He was the team leader and captain of the defense at Mississippi State. It takes smarts and the ability to read offensive formations and communicate to teammates as the defensive captain.	2013 – Texas A&M, Alabama 2014 – LSU, Texas A&M, Auburn	225 REPS – 16 VERTICAL JUMP – 40.5 BROAD JUMP – 10'1" 20 SHUTTLE – 4.27 60 SHUTTLE – N/A 3 CONE – 7.21
8.0	INITIAL QUICKS	He hesitates when the ball is snapped. However, he has shown he has the quickness to react quickly after hesitating. Also, when lining up near the line of scrimmage he shows exceptional get off when used as a pass rusher on designed blitzes.		
8.5	PLAY STRENGTH	He excels as a run stopper and as a vocal leader for a defense from the MLB position. It is rare that you see this quality in young players. He		

		plays with good leverage and body control when in pursuit and makes sure when he is making a tackle on a ball carrier that they do not push forward for extra yardage.		
8.6	TACKLING	He is a sure tackler that is a force as a run stopper as he is always driving through ball carriers. He is everywhere much like a land shark the way he swarms the ball carrier and drags them down. You will rarely see this guy miss tackles.		
6.9	SHED BLOCKER	He is strong enough to compete against O-Linemen but does not have a repertoire of pass rush moves to consistently shed blocks. He depends on his speed and athleticism to avoid having to shed blocks. He is slow in getting his hands up against blockers. With that being said, he will battle and take on anybody.		
8.6	RUN AT HIM	He displays very good technique. He is solid and does not move when tackling ball carriers. He is not the type of guy you will see getting dragged around for extra yardage. He is the guy to be avoided but will still find a way to the ball carrier.		
8.5	PURSUIT / RANGE	He pursuits very good for a linebacker and has good closing		

		speed when attacking the ball carrier. He shows off his range by being able to cover ground from sideline to sideline.		
7.9	CLOSING BURST	He has great pursuit and finishes on the ball carrier with force. He knows when it is time to go and shows his closing burst when shooting through gaps to sack the QB or when screen plays develop.		
5.5	ZONE COVERAGE	He does a good job of sinking and dropping into coverage but his hips are not as loose as they need to be in order to be able to change direction in a split second when playing zone coverage. He lets receivers get behind him. He needs to give receivers more of a cushion and make them play in front of him.	CRITICAL FACTORS	
6.0	M / M COVERAGE	He is fast and athletic enough to stay with most TE's or RB's out of the backfield but is not good in coverage. The potential is there as far as being able to develop being the reason I did not kill him with his grade in this category of his game. With that being said, he needs work in coverage to be an effective 3 down linebacker at the next level.	ATH. ABILITY – N/A PLAY STR. – N/A PLAY SPEED – N/A	INITIAL QUICK – N/A COMPETES – N/A INSTINCTS – N/A
7.6	PASS RUSH ABIL.	He is very good when asked to line		

		up near the line as a pass rusher. He has good get off and will get after the QB. He will be used to blitz at times as an ILB if in a 3-4 Defense.	
N/A	ERRORS	This is one solid linebacker so you will not here too many negatives about his game. Some things that he must work on are loosening his hips so that he can change direction better when in coverage. Also, he needs to do a better job of getting his hands up quicker against blockers.	
STRONG POINTS		WEAKNESSES	
<p>He is a tall, well built LB with the versatility to play outside linebacker if needed. He is a team leader that can serve as an anchor to the middle of a defense. He uses his long strides, showing off his straight-line speed when chasing down ball carriers. He is an excellent run defender who displays good lateral movement and closing speed when in pursuit. He is a true take-on linebacker who will compete with linemen or beat them to the spot and leverage his gap with above average play strength. He will use his length and powerful hands to keep himself free and clear of blockers. He has great instincts to find the hole and close the gap on RB's while being able to finish with a wrap-up tackle. He has the athleticism and speed to stay with tight ends on seam routes. He puts himself in good positioning to where he is never out of the play. He will track from sideline to sideline. He always shows great attention to his assignment. He is always around the ball being the reason he has recovered multiple fumbles in his career, strictly off of awareness. He will bring added value to a team on special teams as well as a blitzer.</p>		<p>He is a very gifted ILB that with a few improvements in his game can become elite. He needs to work on his coverage in order to be a consistent three down linebacker at the next level. He looks stiff when asked to cover in space and gives away too much separation with the man he is covering when in zone coverage. He plays a little too high given that he already has a high center of gravity. He hesitates often at the snap of he ball. He does not possess lightning quick feet and the ability to change direction on the dime due to some stiffness in his hips. He possesses long arms but does not use them like they should be used.</p>	

SUMMARY

McKinney is my #1 graded ILB in this draft class as he possesses great size, athleticism, and upside at the position. He is an extremely productive player that could be an anchor to the middle of a defense due to his size, length, and rare leadership ability. He does a good job of maximizing his role based off of the scheme he is in and is always around the ball. He is a strong player that is able to matchup vs. O-Linemen when playing near the line of scrimmage by getting downhill to finish his tackles. He has great instincts and excels in stopping the run. However, he struggles when being put in coverage as he has some stiffness in his hips. He has the versatility to play either in a 4-3 or 3-4 Defense as an ILB and can even play some outside linebacker as long as it does not deal with primarily having to be in coverage. He plays with passion and determination as a leader and captain of a defense. You can expect that same passion and leadership to translate to the next level and potentially be a factor in how productive his career is at the next level. I see Benardrick McKinney as the best inside linebacker in this class and could see him being selected somewhere between the middle of round one into the middle of round two come draft day. It would come as a surprise to me if he were to be selected in the top 10 in this draft. However, I can see him going as early as #16 to the Texans as they need to get Brian Cushing a running mate at ILB in order for their 3-4 Defense to start producing. Some other potential landing spots for McKinney are at #18 to the Chiefs, #27 to the Cowboys, and #30 to the Packers as these are all teams in desperate need of adding a presence in the middle of their defense. Overall, McKinney projects as a starting NFL linebacker who could become a key piece to a solid defense. He has an incredibly high ceiling where if he can work on his coverage skills we could see him in the Pro Bowl someday.

Pro Comparison: Karlos Dansby/Dont'a Hightower