

Running Back Perspective

Contributed by SWPaDem, from NDNation
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A few of the dominoes I suggested in an earlier article are explained below by "SWPaDem". Again, this is all pending improvement on our offensive line.

Hughes does appear to be a bigger version of Darius Walker - with perhaps a greater propensity to go north-south off a quick cut. He certainly is a load to bring down with a lot of forward momentum plus leg pumping to deal with.

If our blocking is for crap, Hughes is the best back to have in there in that his running style seems to help set up his own blocks with the defenders not knowing what side to take off a blocker.

If we are able to get good drive blocking this year, then Allen and Aldridge will look a lot better. As others have posted, Allen was more patient later in the year with sliding along the line and hiding a bit where he wanted to go. He needs that turn-in block to fly though; he still tends to telegraph where he is headed. He can get better with more experience.

Aldridge, if given the blocking to get past the line and into the secondary could be a home run threat, like Allen. It remains to be seen. Franco Harris of the old Steelers was just an ordinary back if he didn't get the blocking to bust him through the line. But when he did get it, he became extraordinary - at least early in his career - once through the line and up to speed.

I hope we run it early and often this year to help set up the passing. We still need a lot of improvement there. Grimes is the best pass catcher we have, but not a game breaker. Kamara looks better than Parris, but both need to learn how to get open better. Accuracy in passing should help a lot here, and let's hope Clausen's arm troubles are behind him. Parris dropped a number of balls last year, but he is young, and hopefully improves in that department with competition.

But and this is pure speculation since we haven't had a chance to see them play yet in college, Floyd and Goodman would appear to be starters in waiting. Both seem to know how to get open, and both will go up after the ball, wherever it is. I hope Weis commits to the run early, at least until Floyd and Goodman get a chance to get their feet wet. At that point, it won't matter where the quarterback throws it or how pretty a spiral it is, as long as he gets it out there.