



CLEVELAND BROWNS TRANSCRIPT

*2020 NFL Draft, Round 6
4-25-20*

WR Donovan-Peoples Jones:

On joining the Cleveland Browns:

“I am very excited. I just needed one chance, and I am very thankful to the Browns and their organization for giving me that chance. I can’t wait to be part of the team.”

On the challenge playing with multiple QBs at Michigan:

“It was challenging, but I think he made me better. I was able to adjust. I think I am ready for whatever adjustment comes in my future. I am blessed to go through everything that I went through.”

On if he hopes to continue to return kicks and punts:

“Yes, sir.”

On if the Browns talked to him about playing returning punts and kicks:

“Yes, sir. That is something I am looking forward to and something that I will be blessed to be a part of.”

On joining WRs Odell Beckham Jr. and Jarvis Landry:

“It is great because I actually got a chance to meet both of them. I was getting some tips from Jarvis while I was down in Florida training for the NFL Combine. Me and him have started to develop our relationship. Those guys are Pro Bowl guys. I just can’t wait to learn from them.”

On how eager he is to be incorporated in the Browns WR corps, given the potential opportunity as a third WR:

“I am so ready. There is going to be a lot of work put in before that, but I am so ready and I am blessed with this opportunity.”

On the advice he received from Landry:

“Just talking to me about the pre-draft process and everything that he did as a rookie and things that he learned. Things he wants me to understand for me as a player.”

On his draft process before ultimately being selected on Day 3:

“Yeah, it has been tough. Never really imagined this, but I am so blessed and so grateful that the Browns selected me and believe in me.”

On if he is the type of player who will remember the WRs selected before him:

“Yeah, I remember. It is a long list. I am definitely going to remember that.”

On the opportunity to share a WRs room with Beckham and Landry:

“Personally, I love competition. Personally, I rise when the competition rises. Those are two of the best receivers in the NFL. I am so thankful for this opportunity to come to Cleveland. I really can’t wait.”

On addressing scouting reports that say he ‘underachieved’ at Michigan and if that is a fair criticism:

“I do not think that is a fair criticism. I did what I could when I had the opportunity. It honestly does not matter now. I am looking at how to get better. I am looking to do everything I can for the Browns offense and the team in general.”

On where he believed he ranked among this year’s WR prospects and if it was tougher due to WR depth in this year’s draft class:

“I am not even one to speak on that. I think that the rankings will reveal itself in the next couple years. I am blessed to be part of this organization, and I am blessed to get a chance.”



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On if he worries about any potential anti-Michigan bias in Cleveland, referring to some former Michigan players sentiments who were with the Browns:

“No, not at all.”

On if he has a relationship with former Michigan and Browns WR Braylon Edwards:

“I know Braylon. We have a pretty good relationship. I grew up watching Braylon and loving how he played at Michigan and just being really good.”

On how close he is to reaching his full potential as a WR based on what he has shown in his career:

“I don’t feel like I started [fully showing my potential] personally, but I have upped my training. I feel like I’m ready, and I feel like it is going to be a great next couple years.”

On considering Ohio State in the recruiting process before committing to Michigan as a highly-regarded high school prospect:

“I looked at every school equally and looked at every school for what they could do for me. I weighed the pros and the cons, and ultimately, made my decision.”

On his interactions with the Browns and if the selection was somewhat of a surprise:

“I was a little surprised. I did talk to them a little bit at the combine and felt really good about them. It is a blessing. I’m just glad they circled back and remembered me.”

On playing with Mayfield and the opportunity for big plays in the Browns offense:

“I’m so excited to play with players like Baker, Odell and Jarvis. They are really good players, and I think that I can come in and soak up a lot information from them and really take it all in. I’m really excited.”

On if Landry’s advice was specific to technique or the league in general:

“Everything. Any question that I had for him, he tried to answer. He always made it be known that I could ask him anything because he has been there before and he has been through a lot. He has been a really good role model for me.”

On his father being an orthopedic surgeon and his father’s influence on his football, educational and professional career:

“He definitely influenced me growing up by wanting me to take academics seriously. I went into college studying biology and switched to psychology. I have always had an academic background. I’m not sure what will come with the next years, but I’m focused on being a Brown and giving them everything that I have.”

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Scout Colton Chapple:

On the Browns selecting WR Donovan Peoples-Jones:

“We ended going receiver with the final pick in the 2020 draft, pick No. 187 with Donovan Peoples-Jones, wide receiver out of Michigan. A local, Detroit, Michigan kid. He was a very highly recruited player coming out of a very successful high school program at Cass Tech. He has played a lot of positions for [Michigan] in terms of wide receiver, slot and punt returner. He was a guy that we saw after looking at him for three years – he is an early declared junior – that was exceptionally athletic and a very talented individual. He ended up winning the offensive skill player of the year for Michigan in 2018. He played immediately as a returner. This is a guy we really like in terms of the overall size, his speed and his athleticism to bring to our unit and contribute in whatever manner our coaches deem fit for him.”

On Peoples-Jones’ athleticism, given he has been rated highly among his peers in the category since high school, and that not necessarily matching the expectations and production in college:

“I think a little bit of it with the high school recruiting process is unfair just because of the unrealistic expectations that these prospects sometimes have and things that really are not in their control. (Peoples-Jones is) a guy who is over six feet, ran 4.48 at the combine and jumped a 44-inch vertical. This guy has those natural gifts of speed, explosiveness and quickness, and you can see that in his route running and you can see that when you have the ball in his hands as returner. I think it is unfair to judge a guy just based squarely on production just because there are a lot of factors that he can’t control. What we saw on tape is when he did have his opportunities, he made the most of it, and he was a very dynamic player once the offense was able to get him to ball quickly or in some of his punt returns earlier as a young kid at Michigan.”

On if Peoples-Jones’ athletic skills and if some of those traits compare to some WRs taken higher than him:

“I would agree with some of that because you saw the traits on display at the combine and you saw some of his numbers being in the top of his class at the combine. I think you really hit it on the head just in terms of being a very wide receiver heavy, very deep draft. We still believe we got a very high-caliber player this late in the draft so that really does excite us moving forward. I think it is unfair to both Donovan and some of the other players that were taken before him to compare based off purely athletic traits. There are so many different pieces to the puzzle when you talk about evaluating a player and then valuing him at a certain point in the draft. This is a guy who has come in and produced when he has the ball in his hands. He has been able to demonstrate and make the most of the opportunities that were given to him, and that is something really stood out to us when we watched him on the field.”

On areas where Peoples-Jones can continue to develop to be successful in the NFL:

“For me personally, I think the adjustment from college receiver to NFL receiver is a very wide gap. It kind of differs on who you talk to. I think with Donovan, in particular, we would like to see a little bit more consistency in his hands. He makes some extremely acrobatic athletic catches. He kind of makes the hard ones look easy, and then sometimes he makes the easy ones look hard. I think it is more just cleaning that up and just getting a more consistent hands-catcher out of him is an area I think that would benefit both him and our team moving forward.”

On if team’s consider a player’s high school recruiting process and ratings when evaluating players for the NFL:

“I would say we don’t go back that far in terms of adjusting how we value the player or where we see him on our board. It is more just a piece of the puzzle. We love to see guys who were multiple-sport athletes that played track or ran or played basketball or baseball plus football because you do see a lot of different traits that can kind of carry over between multiple different sports. I wouldn’t say it is like, ‘Oh, we took this guy because he’s a five star kid or he was a No. 1 receiver coming out of Michigan as a prep player.’ I think it is more so another feather in his cap [to consider] over a long time and more so just the three years he spent in Michigan that he has been a very dynamic and a very exciting player to watch since he really has stepped on the football field.”



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On if this year's deep WR class made it more challenging to rank the position on the team's board:

“With this draft in particular, you saw a lot of very talented players. I can't remember which analyst made a really good point: some guys are a slot receiver only – the small, very dynamic, a lot of quickness. Other ones are the big jump ball catchers. Then, you have sort of the all-around skillsets. I think with this draft in particular, you just had a lot of guys who sort of went into their own categories, but then from each category, there were very productive or very high-level or high-floor players or a guy that can come in and compete immediately. It does make it a little bit difficult when you try to compare across the top players at the position all the way through the fifth, sixth and seventh round. We try and sort of look at each player for what they do best and how we put them in a position to do that. I think with Donovan in particular, we saw a guy that does have some explosiveness and does have the run-after-catch ability, plus his added punt return production was really sort of a very attractive skillset that made us want to go ahead and pull the trigger on him in today's draft.”

On if there are additional traits People-Jones has in addition to his size and athleticism that make him a fit for the Browns offense:

“Yeah. I do not want to speak for the rest of the scouts, but it is something we are continuing to learn just with not being able to be in the building with our coaches and not being able to really see them interact with our players. For our defensive scheme, we did a lot of watching the San Francisco cutups that our coaches have made. Now, with the offense, we are transitioning toward watching old Vikings tape to figure out what type of player Coach (Stefanski) wants to work with. I think you have kind of seen us move in that direction. At the receiver position, speed is paramount. That is one of the most important attributes that we like to have at the position. A very close second is just natural football intelligence because what we ask of our guys is a lot more than what they were asked to do in college in terms of conceptually route adjustments, multiple alignments, shifts, motions and some stuff we have picked up on watching the Vikings old 2019 tape. It has been a learning curve for all of us, but with each one of our picks, the common theme you can kind of see is we want smart players, we want tough players and we want accountable players. Within each position group, you have a certain number of position specifics or physical tools that do come into play when we are comparing Player A to Player B.”

On if there is potential value in Peoples-Jones being humbled by dropping in the draft and how he may respond to it:

“You do see it sometimes with guys who are either disappointed where they get drafted or sort of let down based off of expectations. I think it is a good thing to have high expectations because then you hold yourself to a higher standard and you work your butt off to reach those expectations. If anything, I do see it kind of light a fire under a lot of these college prospects because everybody is going to have an adjustment period once they do come into an NFL building and start practicing with NFL players. I do not want to say it is a good thing [for him that] he was drafted in the sixth round where we took him, but we see a guy that we got a very, very good value pick and a guy who we see some of his best football might actually be ahead of him based off his traits and how he fits into our scheme.”

On if special teams coordinator Mike Priefer provided feedback on Peoples-Jones as a returner:

“Coach Priefer met with Donovan at the combine. I don't want to speak for him on what his thoughts were. I'm sure we will get that at some point. He is a guy that has been very productive. He was a Freshman All-American as a punt returner so he does have that big play ability. That is almost another added bonus to what he will be able to provide for us in the offensive passing game. It helps his value when it comes to building a roster, especially when it comes to who are we going to keep up on the active for game day and where do we see him fitting – is he going to play outside or is he going to play inside? That is more of a question for Coach Priefer, (pass game coordinator/wide receivers) Coach (Chad) O'Shea and Coach Stefanski to figure out. Whenever you do have an added skill set – whether it is a returner or whether it is a cover player on special teams – where you can help the team not only on the offensive or defensive side of the ball but you can help in the special teams game, that definitely adds value to the pick and to your roster position.”



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On if selecting a WR in the sixth round can sometimes be based on athleticism and taking a shot on upside and potential:

“There is a little bit of that. I have seen this a lot in Day 3 of the draft where there is a lot more target shooting in terms of teams’ boards differ on Day because it is ‘Is he a good fit for our scheme? What about our need at the position?’ versus ‘This guy is a really good athlete, but he needs some development or he needs to sort of reach his ceiling.’ That certainly attracted us to it, but don’t get me wrong, we think Donovan is still a very good receiver and think he is a very good player It is more so an added bonus that he does have great size, he does have great speed and he does have great athleticism. That is a guy that excites you because you can get him in our coaching staffs hands, and they can sort of mold him, coach him up and develop him. When you hit on a guy like that, obviously, you give yourself a pat on the back, but I think it is a credit to both our coaching and scouting staffs for doing their homework and making sure we took the time to see what he does well and how we put him in a position to do that with our team?”

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