



# **FEATURE CLIPPINGS**

**RB DAVID WILLIAMS**

**SEVENTH ROUND (NO. 226)**

**ARKANSAS**



# Former Razorback David Williams, picked by Denver Broncos in NFL Draft, realizes dream

By Tom Murphy  
Arkansas Online  
April 29, 2018

"David Williams, our final pick in the draft, is a big, bruising running back from Arkansas," John Elway, Denver's president of football operations, wrote on his Twitter account. "He plays with great effort and we're glad to make him a Denver Bronco."

The 6-foot, 224-pound Williams was lightly used in three seasons at South Carolina, but he graduated from the school in Columbia, S.C., and found a home in the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville backfield.

Williams led the Hogs with 656 rushing yards, 827 all-purpose yards, 8 rushing touchdowns and 10 total touchdowns in 2018 and made an impression on NFL scouts.

"I always had the talent," Williams said on a conference call with Denver media. "I just never had the opportunity to really show it. Once I got to Arkansas, I got the opportunity to show and express my game more. I just felt more comfortable in a pro-style offense."

The native of Philadelphia made only one start, but he showed versatility as a back who had a knack for falling forward, wriggling for extra yardage and catching passes. He had 10 receptions for 171 yards and 2 touchdowns.

Williams told Denver media that the call from the Broncos, when he was also talking to NFL teams about potential free agent deals, "blew my mind."

Williams heads to a franchise that already has Philadelphia natives in safety Will Parks (University of Arizona) and linebacker Zaire Anderson (University of Nebraska).

"We all grew up together, played little league together, high school against each other," Williams said. "It's crazy. It's my second home, basically. I get to come in and be comfortable with guys that I already have a relationship with. They can show me the ropes."

Williams rushed for two touchdowns against Florida A&M, Texas A&M and Missouri, and he had one of his better performances against the Gamecocks, when he had a rushing touchdown and caught a 16-yard pass that was originally called a 23-yard touchdown before a booth review ruled he had stepped out of bounds.

Williams told the Denver reporters his style is versatile.

"I think I can do everything out of the backfield," he said. "I'm a great pass protector. I catch well out of the backfield. I can also run in between the tackles with elite speed to get away if I'm getting chased."

Williams averaged a career-high 5.8 yards per carry in his one season with the Razorbacks.

In three seasons at South Carolina, where he transitioned from a four-star signee for Coach Steve Spurrier to the Will Muschamp regime, Williams compiled 794 rushing yards and five touchdowns.

Williams was the second and final Arkansas player taken in the draft, joining first-round choice Frank Ragnow of the Detroit Lions, making it the fewest Razorbacks selected since guard Mitch Petrus of Carlisle was the only Arkansas player taken in 2010.

Williams was not the only running back the Broncos drafted this weekend, as Denver also picked Oregon's Royce Freeman in the third round Friday.

Former Arkansas quarterback Austin Allen signed a free agent deal with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. A Fayetteville native and two-year starter, Allen completed 105 of 187 passes for 1,427 yards, with 10 touchdowns and 5 interceptions in 2018.

Former Arkansas cornerback Henre Toliver has agreed to sign with the Indianapolis Colts, per SBNation. The Marrero, La., native tied for the team lead with three interceptions, ranked seventh with 43 tackles and had a fumble return for a touchdown as a senior.

# David Williams selected by Denver Broncos in seventh round of NFL draft

By Gina Mizell  
The Denver Post  
April 28, 2018

With their final pick of the NFL draft, the Denver Broncos took Arkansas running back David Williams in the seventh round, joining Oregon's Royce Freeman as ball-carriers selected by Denver this weekend.

Williams, who has a 6-foot-1, 230-pound frame, totaled 656 rushing yards (5.6 yards per carry) and eight touchdowns last season. Denver acquired the 226th overall selections after swapping fifth-round picks with the Seattle Seahawks.

Denver's other draft picks were are North Carolina State defensive end Bradley Chubb with the fifth overall pick, Courtland Sutton (40th overall) in the second round, Oregon running back Royce Freeman (71st overall) and Boston College cornerback Isaac Yiadom (99th overall) in the third round, Penn State wide receiver DaeSean Hamilton in the fourth round (113th overall), Wisconsin tight end Troy Fumagalli in the fifth round (156th overall) and Arizona State offensive lineman Sam Jones (183rd overall) and Washington linebacker Keishawn Bierria (217th overall) in the sixth round.

## About David Williams

Size: 6-foot-1, 230 pounds

College: Arkansas

Age: 23

## Three things to know

- Williams appeared in 42 career college games with six starts. He rushed for 1,467 yards with 13 touchdowns.
- Williams played three seasons at South Carolina before leaving for Arkansas as a graduate transfer last season.
- Williams, a Philadelphia native, is a former four-star rated high school recruit.

## Scouting report

**Strengths:** Experienced running back who adapted quickly at Arkansas and thrived ... Large durable frame that should excel in short yardage ... Earned several academic honors while at South Carolina.

**Weaknesses:** Does not have elite speed ... A late developer in the college game ... Has yet to live up to lofty expectations as a highly rated high school recruit.

# How they fit: Broncos' Day 3 picks

By STAFF

DenverBroncos.com

April 28, 2018

Pick No. 226 (seventh round): Arkansas RB David Williams

The Broncos refilled their running backs room in the draft after bringing third-round pick Royce Freeman and seventh-round pick David Williams into the fold. Williams finished his collegiate career at Arkansas as a graduate transfer after playing three seasons at South Carolina.

He was a strong runner for the Razorbacks, averaging 5.8 yards per carry, and he was an efficient receiver out of the backfield, recording 17.1 yards per catch. Speed appeared to be a concern, as his longest run in 2017 was 26 yards, but he ran a solid 4.52-second 40-yard dash at Arkansas' pro day.

"I think [my run style] is versatile," Williams said. "I think I can do everything out of the backfield. I am a great pass protector. I catch well out of the backfield. I can also run in between the tackles with elite speed to get away if I am getting chased."

Williams will be expected to compete with the rest of the Broncos' young running backs as the group looks to find a new starter after the team released veteran C.J. Anderson.

John Elway

@johnelway

David Williams, our final pick in the draft, is a big, bruising running back from Arkansas. He plays with great effort and we're glad to make him a Denver Bronco.

# Arkansas Razorbacks 2017 Team Awards: David Williams went from a South Carolina graduate transfer to the Razorbacks' leading rusher this season

By Ryan Wright  
Athlon Sports & Life  
January 2, 2018

The Arkansas Razorbacks' 2017 season certainly did not turn out the way many had hoped. After a three-season record of 22-17 with some fantastic conference wins, head coach Bret Bielema and company slipped back into an unwanted area experienced during his first season with the Hogs, ending this season 4-8 overall and just 1-7 in the SEC. The result was a dismissal of athletic director Jeff Long, Bielema, and a complete shakeup of the staff with the hiring of SMU head coach Chad Morris.

Despite the tough season and long list of injuries to starters on both sides of the ball, the Razorbacks played hard giving fans something to cheer throughout the 2017 schedule.

**Offensive MVP: David Williams, RB**

Williams, a graduate transfer from South Carolina, was a pleasant surprise for Razorback Nation in 2017. The hard-nosed runner ended up leading the Hogs in rushing yards (656) and touchdowns (8), passing opening game starter Devwah Whaley in the stat column by season's end. Whaley started 11 games to Williams' one, but Williams got stronger as the season went along putting up a total of 231 yards and three touchdowns on 32 carries against LSU, Mississippi State and Missouri to end the season. Williams also helped in the passing attack, catching 10 passes for 171 yards and two more scores.

**Defensive MVP: De'Jon Harris, LB**

Harris (above, right) was one of the SEC's most productive defenders throughout the season, racking up 115 tackles, 8.5 tackles for a loss, and 3.5 sacks, all team highs. The sophomore missed out on All-SEC honors but gives high hope for the Razorbacks' defense in 2018.

**Best Freshman: Chase Hayden, RB**

Devwah Whaley was the starter for the Hogs in the backfield, but Hayden was instant offense off the bench. Hayden ended the year with 326 yards with four touchdowns on 61 carries before suffering a lower leg fracture against Auburn. Even though he played in just seven games, he opened many eyes with his 120 rushing yards on just 14 carries in the season opener against FCS opponent Florida A&M. Hayden's field vision and speed gives him the opportunity to score from anywhere on the field.

**Best Newcomer: Jonathan Nance, WR**

The signing of Nance out of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College was a blessing in disguise. Arkansas lost five of its top six receivers from 2016 due to graduation and their lone holdover, Jared Cornelius, played in just three games before an injury ended his season. Nance emerged as the Razorbacks' top target, leading the way in receptions (37), receiving yards (539), and touchdown catches (5), as he developed good chemistry with both quarterbacks – Austin Allen and Cole Kelley.

**Best Play of the Season: Jonathan Nance's 49-Yard TD Reception vs. TCU**

With high hopes for the season still in the air in Game 2 of the season, Arkansas answered the call against then-No. 23 TCU. The Horned Frogs' opening possession of the game was an eight-play, 45-yard drive capped by a 1-yard Sewo Olonilua touchdown run. The Razorbacks responded with a six-play, 75-yard drive punctuated on a 49-yard TD strike from Austin Allen to Nance.

#### Best Performance: Cole Kelley vs. Alabama

Playing against one of the nation's best defenses and in front of an offensive line that had trouble pass protecting, Kelley proved his toughness against Alabama in Bryant-Denny Stadium. In a losing effort, Kelley dropped back 42 times, completing 23 passes for 200 yards with a touchdown and an interception in his first collegiate start.

#### Best Game: 38-37 Win at Ole Miss

With morale low on the team and in the stands, the Hogs grouped together amid a three-game losing streak to defeat Ole Miss 38-37 in Oxford. The Razorbacks turned back the clock, running for 260 yards led by T.J. Hammonds (84 yards on 11 carries) while Cole Kelley finished with 189 passing yards and three touchdowns. The defense and special teams also stepped up highlighted by a 22-yard scoop-and-score by Kevin Richardson late in the fourth quarter that trimmed the deficit to two points (37-35). A 34-yard field goal by Connor Limpert with four seconds left gave Arkansas what turned out to be its only SEC win of the year.

# Arkansas 'surprised' RB David Williams during recruitment

By Trent Shadid  
SECCountry.com  
August 7, 2017

David Williams envisioned Fayetteville as a 'one-stoplight town' David Williams had already found a home by the time Arkansas coach Bret Bielema reached out to him last May about joining the Razorbacks.

The graduate transfer from South Carolina committed to Connecticut last January. He'd spent more than three months with every intention of enrolling and starting at running back for the Huskies this season.

The call from Bielema made him hesitate. He wondered if continuing his playing days in the SEC would be more beneficial to his NFL prospects. But he also wondered if life in Arkansas had much of anything to offer.

"First call I was talking to Coach [Bielema] or whatever and I was thinking, 'Arkansas, Arkansas? I can't imagine. I feel like it's country and it's one stoplight in the town,'" Williams told reporters last week.

"But when I came on my visit, I was surprised what they had to offer."

That trip came in early June and Williams officially flipped his commitment two weeks later. He arrived on campus soon after and has already impressed his coaches and teammates. He's expected to be the backup to Devwah Whaley, a talented sophomore Williams has cherished competing with for carries.

"I just sat down with my family and I thought I would challenge myself," Williams said. "I knew if I went to UConn, I would start right away with no competition. So, I thought I would come out here and see where I stand with the best of the best."

David Williams needed a 'fresh start' Things simple didn't work out at South Carolina. He spent a portion of last August atop the Gamecocks' depth chart, only to find himself in coach Will Muschamp's doghouse before the season even began.

Williams received no carries in three games last season. He was healthy, but the coaching staff simply opted to leave him on the bench. Only once in 12 regular-season games was he given double-digit carries.

Still, he had some good moments. He rushed for 67 yards on 7 carries (9.6 average per carry) against East Carolina. A week after not carrying the ball against Georgia, he rushed for 69 yards on 15 carries against Massachusetts. Those bright spots proved to Williams, a 4-star recruit from Philadelphia in the 2013 class, he had the talent to become an impact player at the FBS level.

"Me and Coach Muschamp just didn't see eye to eye," Williams said. "He didn't recruit me. I was one who coach [Steve] Spurrier recruited, so I understand it was business or whatever, but I just felt I needed a fresh start."

So, he graduated and looked to spend his final year of eligibility elsewhere. The book closed on his South Carolina career with 794 yards and 5 touchdowns.

Williams has now found a coach who did recruit him coming out of high school — Bielema. Arkansas' coach pursued him while still at Wisconsin in 2012, less than a year before he would arrive in Fayetteville.

"We had a good relationship," Williams said of Bielema. "I think the only reason I didn't go to Wisconsin was they were taking one running back. They were recruiting me hard and Corey Clement real hard. Corey just happened to commit before I did."

Loss of one grad transfer possibly helped Arkansas bring in David Williams  
When National Signing Day came and went last February, Arkansas knew it wasn't done recruiting additional players for the 2017 season. Bielema and his staff had left open the possibility for a graduate transfer to be added.

For a couple months, the top priority to fill that spot was defensive tackle Scott Pagano. The Clemson graduate was considered the top defensive player on the grad transfer market last spring.

Pagano had Arkansas among his final choices. It was a destination that made sense for both parties. Pagano could work closely with a defensive line coach who had recently been in the NFL — first-year assistant John Scott Jr. And the Hogs needed added depth and talent on the defensive front.

It didn't pan out. Scott canceled his visit to Fayetteville in late March and committed to Oregon, where he is now enrolled, two weeks later. Missing out on Pagano seemed significant at the time, but it may have been a blessing in disguise.

Arkansas starting running back Rawleigh Williams III abruptly retired from football at the end of spring practice in late April. Reserve back Juan Day graduated and chose to transfer in mid-May. Suddenly, the Hogs were projected to have just three scholarship running backs for the 2017 season — Whaley and true freshmen Maleek Williams and Chase Hayden.

Arkansas then reached out to David Williams and things worked out from there. But had Pagano pledged to the Razorbacks, it's possible there wouldn't have been room for the running back.

# David Williams wins Crip Hall Award

By Matt Jones

Whole Hog Sports

November 4, 2017

Arkansas running back David Williams was presented with the Razorbacks' top Homecoming honor Saturday.

Williams was named recipient of the 2017 Crip Hall Award, which has been presented annually since 1950 to the most outstanding senior on Homecoming. Williams rushed five times for 43 yards and had an 11-yard reception during the Razorbacks' 39-38 win over Coastal Carolina.

The award is voted on by media members.

Williams is the first player to win the award after transferring with the NCAA's graduate exemption. He played four seasons at South Carolina before transferring to Arkansas earlier this year.

Claris G. "Crip" Hall was the Arkansas Secretary of State from 1937-1961.

# Starting RB handed off to Williams

By Bob Holt

Whole Hog Sports

September 24, 2017

Senior tailback David Williams, a graduate transfer from South Carolina, made his first start for the Razorbacks.

Williams started in place of sophomore Devwah Whaley, who was involved in what Coach Bret Bielema called "a little disagreement in the locker room" with receiver Brandon Martin last week.

Bielema said the incident had nothing to do with Whaley not starting, that he was limited in practice during the week and didn't practice the previous week because of an ankle injury.

"He didn't get a lot of practice time," Bielema said. "And no matter how good of a player, how long you own it, if you can't practice, just don't know how much you can get out there and play.

"We gave David the opportunity just because he had been there the whole time and felt better with the ball security and everything."

Williams rushed 11 times for 68 yards and 2 touchdowns, and also caught 2 passes for 28 yards and a touchdown. He said he found out he was starting late in the week.

"I was pretty much taking all the reps," he said. "So I had an idea I'd start."

Arkansas junior fullback Kendrick Jackson made his first start of the season and fourth of his career.

## Blown call

Arkansas caught a big break with 10:02 to play in the second quarter when a missed call by side judge Chris Conley cost the Aggies a touchdown.

Conley blew a run by Aggies quarterback Kellen Mond dead at the Razorbacks 10.

Conley believed Mond had stepped out of bounds with his left foot, but replays showed he stayed in bounds before reaching the end zone.

The SEC office issued a statement after halftime confirming the blown call.

"The ball carrier was incorrectly ruled out of bounds and the play was whistled dead by the official," the statement said. "Based on NCAA football playing rule 12-3-3-g, 'If the ball carrier is rule out bounds, the play is not reviewable.' "

After the call, the Razorbacks held the Aggies to a field goal by Daniel LaCamera, which cut Arkansas' lead to 21-10.

## Offensive line shuffle

Arkansas started the same offensive line of center Frank Ragnow, tackles Johnny Gibson and Colton Jackson, and guards Hjalte Froholdt and Ty Clary, but there was some shuffling.

Paul Ramirez went into the game at left tackle for Jackson, then later moved to right tackle with Gibson taking over for Clary at right guard.

During the fourth quarter and overtime period, the line had Jackson at left tackle, Froholdt at left guard, Ragnow at center, Gibson at right guard and Ramirez at right tackle.

It was the first extended playing time for Ramirez, a junior-college transfer who redshirted last season.

#### Ending drought

Arkansas finally scored in the second half against a Football Bowl Subdivision opponent.

It only took 108 minutes and 36 seconds to do so.

David Williams' 1-yard touchdown run with 1:53 left in the third quarter against Texas A&M was Arkansas' first points in the second half since Devwah Whaley's 5-yard touchdown run with 5:29 left in the fourth quarter of the Razorbacks' 58-42 victory at Mississippi State on Nov. 19 of last year.

Arkansas was held scoreless in the second half after that game by Missouri, Virginia Tech and TCU.

#### The crowd

The announced attendance for Saturday's game was 64,668, which is the lowest of the teams' seven games at AT&T Stadium.

The largest crowd at the venue for an Arkansas-Texas A&M matchup was 71,872 for their first game in 2009.

Other crowds were 65,622 in 2010, 69,836 in 2011, 68,113 in 2014, 67,339 in 2015 and 67,751 last season.

#### Limpert kicks

Sophomore walk-on Connor Limpert replaced Cole Hedlund as Arkansas' place-kicker. Limpert hit all five of his extra-point attempts, but he didn't attempt a field goal.

Limpert also is handling kickoffs for the second season.

#### Flag bearers

Sophomore running back Devwah Whaley carried the United States flag and senior nose guard Bijhon Jackson carried the Arkansas flag when the Razorbacks ran onto the field before the game.

#### Jersey for Jerry

Arkansas Athletic Director Jeff Long presented Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones with a framed No. 61 jersey of the Razorbacks' Cowboys-inspired jersey.

Jones wore No. 61 as a guard at Arkansas, where he was a senior starter on the Razorbacks' 1964 team that finished 11-0 and won a share of the national championship.