

⚠ Weather Alert

Freeze Warning



[Home](#) / [Sports](#) / [WKU Sports](#)

http://www.bgdailynews.com/sports/wku/speedy-sloan-becoming-more-well-rounded-receiver/article_b9ce62e3-f185-51b3-b8e9-352edd67a3e2.html

WKU FOOTBALL

Speedy Sloan becoming more well-rounded receiver

Atlanta native averaged 15.17 yards per catch as a freshman

BRAD STEPHENS bstephens@bgdailynews.com 44 min ago

Western Kentucky wide receiver Jacquez Sloan (right) is tackled Dec. 16 by Georgia State defensive end Hardrick Willis on a kick return during the Hilltoppers' 27-17 loss to Georgia State in the Cure Bowl in Orlando, Fla. Sloan and WKU will open the 2018 season Aug. 31 at Wisconsin.

[Buy Now](#)

Austin Anthony/photo@bgdailynews.com

There's no doubting Jacquez Sloan's ability as a deep threat.

Coach Mike Sanford brought Sloan to Western Kentucky knowing he possesses special speed. The receiver broke onto the scene last fall as a freshman with three catches of at least 30 yards.

“I’m not very tall but I’ve got a long stride,” the 5-foot-9 Sloan said Tuesday. “I can get up on defensive backs’ feet real quick and it creates a problem.”

This offseason has been dedicated to making Sloan a more well-rounded wide receiver. He’s spent spring practice perfecting his route running and aiming for better consistency catching the ball.

“He’s still learning,” offensive coordinator/wide receivers coach Junior Adams said after WKU’s seventh spring practice. “You can see the improvement each day.

“He’s catching the ball better, seeing it, running good routes, competing. He has to keep working.”

Sloan was a running back his sophomore and junior seasons at Grady High School in Atlanta. He moved to wide receiver his senior year and racked up 62 catches, 1,252 yards and 13 touchdowns.

For his efforts at wideout, Sloan earned first team all-state honors from the Georgia Sports Writers Association. He led his team to a 10-2 record.

Sloan committed to the Hilltoppers last winter in the final hours before National Signing Day for the Class of 2017. He was a 247 Sports Composite two-star prospect whose only FBS offers were from Georgia State and WKU.

Sloan was part of a youth movement last season for the Toppers. True freshmen on WKU’s roster got time all over the field, from running back Jakairi Moses and right tackle Cole Spencer on offense to defensive end DeAngelo Malone and safety Kyle Bailey on the other side of the ball.

Sloan got his chance over the middle of the season, piling up a combined 161 receiving yards in October games against Charlotte, Old Dominion and Florida Atlantic.

“Game reps, they’re paying off,” Adams said. “You can tell he’s a step faster than he was last year. The offseason was good for him. He’s just growing.”

Sloan broke loose for a 44-yard touchdown catch Oct. 20 in a 35-31 win at ODU after snagging a 39-yard reception one week earlier in a 45-14 victory over Charlotte.

Sloan posted four catches for a career-best 61 yards Oct. 28 against FAU, but the Hilltoppers lost 42-28 after leading early in the fourth quarter. He added a 32-yard catch that day to his collection of long receptions.



Sloan finished his freshman season with 12 catches for 182 yards and two touchdowns. His number of receptions ranked 10th among all WKU pass catchers, but his 15.17 yards per catch ranked third behind only Kylen Towner (15.89) and Lucky Jackson (15.38).

Sloan figures to take on a bigger role at receiver in 2018 after the graduations of Fant, Towner and Cameron Echols-Luper. He's getting ready for that role by trying to improve his overall game.

“I come out here and have to have a great mindset, put in the work every day and try to get better,” Sloan said. “... Every route we’ve got in the program, I’ve gotten better at.”

Sloan will likely receive cushion from defensive backs who are worried about him beating them deep. The hope is that he can take advantage of that extra space and catch balls on short and intermediate routes.

Then when DBs come down to challenge Sloan closer to the line of scrimmage, he can blow by them and go deep like he did in 2017.

“Guys respect his speed,” Adams said. “The most important thing we’ve been working on with him is exploding off the football and being able to stop. We’re working on his intermediate game.”

– Follow Daily News sports reporter Brad Stephens on Twitter @BradBGDN or visit bgdailynews.com.

MORE INFORMATION



Hilltopper O-line aims for improvement in 2018 under Woods

RB Samuel among standouts in 'highly, highly competitive' spring scrimmage

Veltkamp hired as Hilltoppers' new strength coach

Ad 



Brad Stephens

Bowling Green Daily News sports reporter primarily covering Western Kentucky football and men's basketball.