UNH Football: Dylan Laube’s Journey to the NFL

Tim Keough, Sports Writer

DURHAM, N.H.- From his Westhampton football days to the Las Vegas Raiders, Dylan Laube has defied the odds and made his football dreams a true living.

Laube, finishing up his playing career at the University of New Hampshire this past fall, was able to showcase his skills throughout the Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) and even during his few Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) matchups while at UNH. His quick burst, ability to bounce outside, great hands for receiving as well as his impressive returning skills had given him the edge to gain an opportunity at a chance at the NFL. Through hard work and a love for the game, came a real sight in mind about a role as a professional football player.

Recently, Laube has been drafted in the 6th round of the 2024 NFL draft at pick 208 to the Raiders.

Laube grew up in Westhampton, New York, and had attended Westhampton Beach High School where he played football.

He racked up 120 career touchdowns with 47 of them being scored during his senior season leading to a Long Island-record. Laube would eventually help win the school their first Long Island class title.

Along with the touchdowns, Dylan had also ran for 2,680 yards as a senior being named the Hansen Award winner as best player in Suffolk. Laube was chosen to All-USA New York by USA today, and named to All-Long Island by Newsday during his high school career at Westhampton. Through a successful high school career, Laube was only able to receive one athletic scholarship offer from the University of New Hampshire, which he’d end up accepting.

Once at UNH, Dylan had started his career as a true redshirt freshman in 2018 only appearing in three games. The next year, he was able to get more reps, putting up stats such as 285 rushing yards in 63 rushes, 412 receiving yards on 28 receptions and 675 returning yards from 29 kick returns in ten games. This was his chance to express to the UNH football program the type of player they were getting with his ability to play in many spots on the football field. The end of the 2019 season would lead to him getting selected to the Freshman All-American second-team by Phil Steele. His next real year, because of the pandemic, wouldn’t actually be until 2021.

In 2021, Dylan had finished with 80 rush attempts for 501 yards with four touchdowns to add to his rushing stats. He was also able to grab 22 catches for 206 yards and one touchdown after the season. Showing off his amazing returning ability, he had posted 652 yards returning on 30 attempts.

His biggest games during the 2021 season came against Towson, Lafayette, Granite State rival: Dartmouth, and Border Battle rival: Maine. Laube had rushed for over 100 rushing yards in the Dartmouth and Maine game, both played in Wildcat Stadium. These performances came towards the end of the season, expressing to the Wildcat fans what was to come from Laube in the future for UNH football.
Next season in 2022, Laube was able to add to his resume and obtain seven All-American honors after his most electric season as a Wildcat. Laube had finished with 1,205 rushing yards with 15 touchdowns as well as 464 receiving yards on 49 receptions with two touchdowns. He was also able to add two more returning touchdowns, one kick return and punt return, giving him 19 all-purpose touchdowns with 2,328 all-purpose yards in the 2022 season. This was such a remarkable season for Laube that it really started to put his name on the map grabbing some NFL teams attention.

Laube had rushed for over 100 yards five times and had one game with over 200 yards when he played against UAlbany. That was probably one of his best rushing games ever for UNH.

Some more of his impressive games that season came during the last game of the regular season, against Maine, and their first matchup in the FCS playoffs. Against Maine, Laube posted 190 rushing yards along with three rushing touchdowns which came up huge in their 42-41 overtime victory to beat Maine.

In his first ever Division I FCS playoff game, Laube had 157 rushing yards, 127 receiving yards, and 140 returning yards with four touchdowns in the game (three rushing, one receiving). UNH would go on to advance to the second round after defeating Fordham at home, 52-42.

Laube is a literal beast with his ability to do so much on the offensive side for the Wildcats and being able to give them a spark when needed.

The ‘Cats would end up losing to Holy Cross in the second round, 19-35, finishing at 9-4 on the season. This was just the start for Laube since he was finally able to get his name on the map in college football, but also towards teams in the NFL.

In his final year at UNH, Laube’s senior season was definitely one of his better ones, but it doesn’t compare to his previous season in 2022. In his first game of 2023, Dylan had posted solid stats throughout the game in an easy team win against Stonehill. Next game against their one FBS opponent this season, Laube torched Central Michigan leading to one of his most insane games ever. Laube had only 30 rushing yards and one touchdown on the ground, but was able to fill it up through the air with 295 receiving yards and two touchdowns being known as a historic game in his career. As a running back to get that many receiving yards is insane, but to be known as the single greatest receiving yard performer in UNH history is quite the accomplishment.

As the season went on, many ups and downs with losses in close games to other FCS opponents would ultimately end their season shorter than expected. They finished with a 6-5 overall record. Laube was able to tear up teams like Dartmouth, Towson, UAlbany, and even Villanova this past season. His best rushing games came when playing Dartmouth with 180 rushing yards and Villanova where he posted 132 rushing yards with 75 receiving yards.

He finished the season with a total of 749 rushing yards, 699 receiving yards, and 647 returning yards with 18 total touchdowns on the year. Not his most impressive season when it came to rushing, but he was able to be one of the best receivers on the team, as a running back.

Laube would go on to get invited to the Reese’s Senior Bowl during the end of the 2023 season with the Wildcats. It took place in Mobile, Alabama and ended up leading to a great experience for Laube. It was an amazing chance to showcase his skills with other top seniors in the country, including FBS players. Some players in the game include Laiatu Latu, Bo Nix, Spencer Rattler, Byron Murphy II, Payton Wilson, Ricky Pearsall, and Xavier Legette. All of these players ended up being drafted, along with Dylan Laube, in the 2024 NFL Draft.

Laube would go on to the NFL combine where he’d really get to express his overall athleticism, speed, agility and skills. Out of running backs at the combine, he would tie for second in the 10-yard split (1.52 seconds), third in 3-cone drill (6.84 seconds), first in 20-yard shuttle (4.02 seconds), and grinded out 23 reps of bench press placing fifth. He also ran a 4.54 40-yard dash during the combine. Laube's ability to compete even with some of the top talent in the country is a great showing.

On the third day of the NFL draft, Laube would be selected at the 32nd pick of the sixth round, pick 208, by the Las Vegas Raiders. He was picked as a running back/return specialist which is going to be a good fit for Laube since they lack running backs at the moment.
Mentioned in an interview, Laube had said teams he’d prefer playing with in the NFL would be the Kansas City Chiefs or the Las Vegas Raiders. Luckily, it worked out on his end. Laube has become the 14th Wildcat alumni drafted by a NFL team as well as the first UNH running back drafted. Laube is also the first pick from New Hampshire since 2013 to be drafted into the NFL. The last pick from UNH was Jared Smith, defensive tackle.

Laube, in general, has a hard go at lasting in the NFL since he had come from the FCS which is a different level compared to FBS and the NFL. The fact that he can cut so well, return with such great vision and speed, and show his toughness when it comes to taking hits and getting back up highlights on how effective he can be for the Raiders, but also in the league. Laube’s stellar career has led him to a dream of a lifetime, only looking to keep the same push in the NFL.