



## Justin Fields Focuses On Daily Improvement, Not QB Battle, At Ohio State Spring Camp

After two months of winter workouts, Ohio State started spring camp this week with its first two practices Wednesday and Friday at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center.

As the Buckeyes get back in action on the field, sophomore quarterback Justin Fields headlines the myriad players shaking off the rust with each day of drills.

In Columbus since Jan. 4, officially enrolling for OSU's spring semester three days later before hitting the weight room with the team from Jan. 17 through March 2, Fields put on his helmet and cleats once again this week as he sported No. 1 and threw the ball around the indoor field.

Naturally, the quarterbacks get back in the groove as the offense revs up. In his first week of practice with Ohio State after he spent his first year at Georgia, Fields' adjustment is amplified.

"It's great being here," Fields said Friday. "Just definitely trying to get my timing down and stuff with the receivers, so just trying to get that, I guess, chemistry together and just try to get better every day.

"This is our first practice in a couple of months, so we're going to have a little bit of rust. But I think we're throwing the ball (well), going to throw the ball better."

While the Buckeyes' quarterback battle begins with redshirt freshman Matthew Baldwin and fifth-year senior Chris Chugunov rounding out the scholarship players at the position, Fields focuses on his own improvement as he learn the offense from head coach Ryan Day, passing game coordinator/quarterbacks coach Michael Yurcich and the rest of the staff. All eyes remain glued to Fields, the former five-star recruit from the 2018 class, but he directs his attention away from the outside noise.

"I don't want to accomplish or prove anything," Fields said. "Really, just for me, my goal is to just become the best quarterback I can be and just keep improving every day."

In competition to replace 2018 starter Dwayne Haskins, whom he knows well, Fields assessed his skillset and how it fits the pass-heavy offense OSU operated under the direction of last year's Heisman Trophy finalist. Haskins (6-3 3/8, 231) and Fields (6-3, 223) have identical builds with rocket arms, but the running threat jumps off the page as an area of separation when comparing the two.

"I think we're both good quarterbacks," Fields said. "We both can throw the ball. Dwayne will probably tell you he can run the ball, too, but I think I have probably a little more speed than him. So I think we both fit the system well, in terms of just the (offense)."

From his high school days at Kennesaw (Ga.) Harrison to one season of spare time on the field with the Bulldogs, Fields is comfortable in the zone read. While potential wrinkles in Ohio State's offense remain to be seen, Fields is up for wherever Day and the Buckeyes take the scheme as he gets comfortable with his new teammates.

"I'm just going to run when needed," Fields said. "I mean, whatever the team needs to win the game — that's what going to happen."

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